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ABSTRACT

This monograph describes the Italian initial and continuing vocational education and training (VET) system and its qualitative and quantitative development. Chapter 1 outlines the general context of the VET system--both institutions and social and economic aspects. It provides facts and figures on such topics as demographic trends in Italy, the rates of employment and unemployment (with a breakdown of the major geographical areas), and the migration process. Chapter 2 describes the institutional framework of the VET system, a highly structured system that is the product of Italy's historical development and a division of responsibilities between the state and regions. Chapter 3 describes the structure and quantitative aspects of the system as embodied in its laws and regulations. It sets out facts and figures on the VET system under regions and the vocational education system under the Ministries of Education and of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research. Chapter 4 describes expenditures on training, including spending on public and private VET from various sources. Chapter 5 analyzes these qualitative aspects of relevance to the VET system: certification procedures, guidance, and training of trainers. Chapter 6 looks at innovations occurring in the Italian system. Appendixes include lists of acronyms and abbreviations and a glossary. (Contains 59 references). (YLB)

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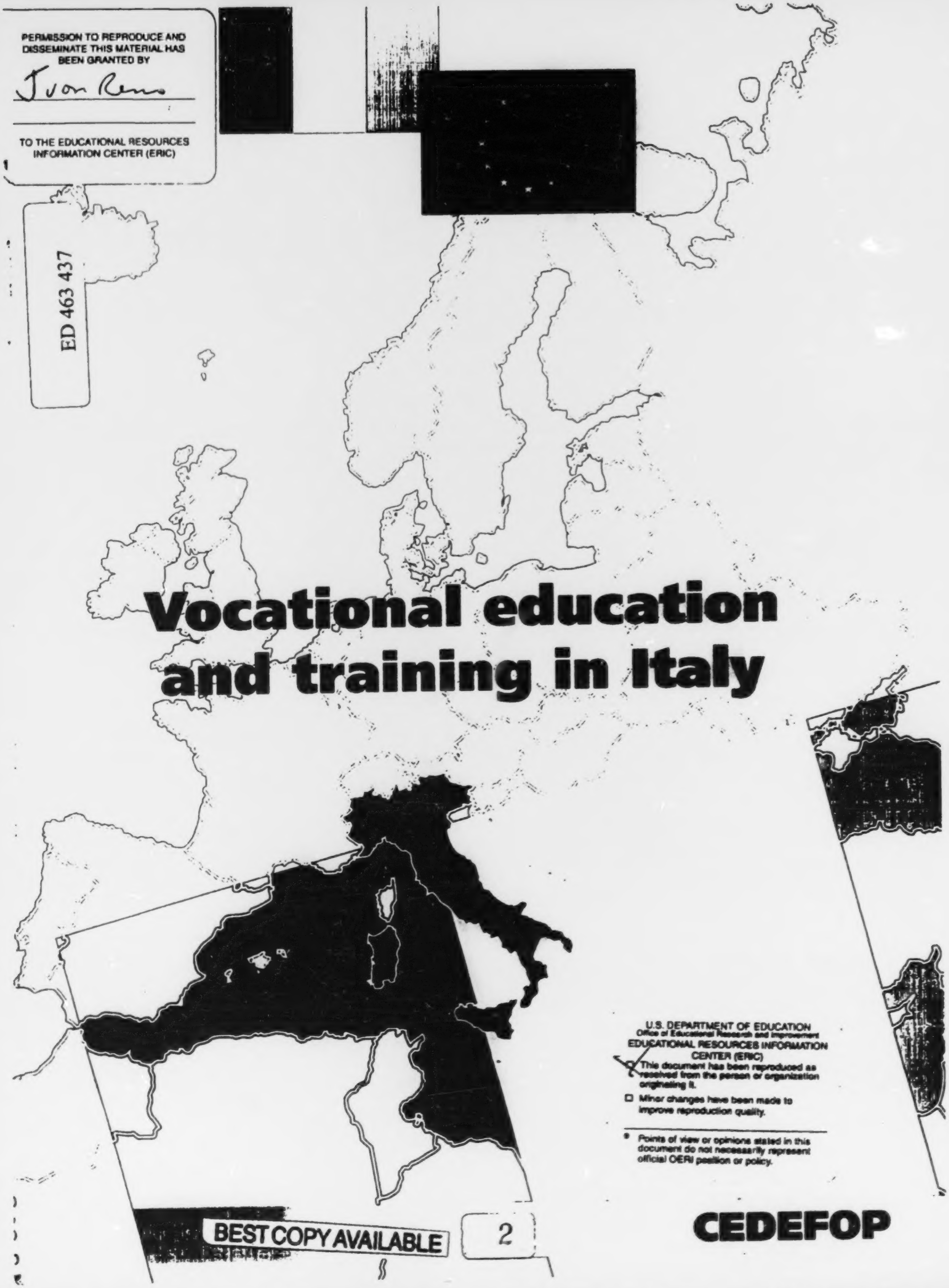

Vocational education and training in Italy

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CEDEFOP

Vocational education and training in Italy

This monograph has been prepared by

ISFOL

Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori
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Cedefop introduction

Objective and target groups

The publication of this description of the vocational education and training system in Italy is a step towards updating and extending the series of descriptions of the (then 12) Member States published by Cedefop between 1993 and 1996. The series now includes Austria, Sweden and Finland and the countries covered by the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement. The objective is to present an overview of vocational education and training activities in Italy so that it is easily understood by interested 'foreigners'. The target group includes those who may be responsible for, and concerned with, VET policy issues, researchers in this field, directors of vocational training departments or institutions, and trainers and teachers, whether they work at EU or Member State level, or for a governmental or social partner organisation. Some may be using the text at their desks as a reference document, others may be visiting the country concerned either on a study visit or to plan or execute a bi- or multi-lateral project and more likely to wish to read the document from beginning to end.

Content and structure

The volumes in this series set out to describe initial and continuing vocational education and training (VET). As far as initial VET is concerned, this means including provision which is in some cases the responsibility of ministries of education and in others of ministries of employment or social affairs. As far as continuing VET is concerned, it requires coverage of provision for both the employed and unemployed, usually by a wide range of governmental bodies and ministries, by private and social partner organisations.

The structure of the report (see the list of contents) has been laid down in some detail by Cedefop, which has also placed limits on how long it should be. This is to make it easier for readers to make comparisons between the training systems in various EU Member States. The structure is, in general terms, similar to that adopted for the reports on the Member States commissioned in 1992, but there have been some changes such as the addition of a chapter on what we have called 'qualitative aspects', including information on certification, training of trainers and guidance. We are requiring the authors of all monographs, including those updating the existing ones, to follow this amended structure, so as to facilitate readers who wish to try to make comparisons between the systems.

Choice of author and consultation procedures

For this series Cedefop has tried to achieve a product which in some ways is impossible. We wished to have a report written by an insider of the system concerned, but easily comprehensible to the outsider. It followed that the person/institution chosen as an author is an insider, located in the country being described and, unless they choose not to do so, writing in their mother tongue. A further corollary of this was that Cedefop has tried to play the role of 'outsider' in discussions on the draft text, in order to draw authors' attention to places where the report was likely not to be easily understood by the public for which it is intended.

Cedefop has also stipulated that the authors must carry out a consultation on the draft with the main parties involved in VET in their country. This has meant their sending the draft not only to the various public bodies responsible for organising the system and providing VET, but also to the principal representative bodies of the social partners. The assistance of the members of Cedefop's management board in the country concerned has in particular being requested in this connection.

Publishing and updating

It is Cedefop's intention, as long as the necessary resources are available, to publish these monographs in paper form in their original language and in English, French and German. In occasional and exceptional circumstances it may publish some monographs in additional languages. Experience has however shown that the timescale involved in translating and publishing in hard-copy form and the rate of change in the systems described means that the reports can almost never be entirely up to date. Cedefop intends therefore also to use electronic means of publishing, including making summaries and updates of the texts available on its interactive Internet site (www.trainingvillage.gr).

Comments and feedback

As indicated above, Cedefop is conscious that in preparing this series it has had to make choices. We would very much appreciate having readers' views as to whether we have made the right ones concerning the scope, content and structure of the report. We would be pleased to have your comments by letter, fax or e-mail.

Vocational training in Italy

The regions have competence for vocational training in Italy, whereas education is a matter for the State. Participation in the school-based general education system is high. Around 70 % of students obtain the State diploma (*maturità*). The majority obtain it by following the vocational stream.

So far a lower proportion of students has participated in initial vocational training in the strict sense (regional VET and apprenticeship), but increasing that proportion is one of the main points of the process of reform and dynamic development currently under way.

In January 1999 it was decided to increase the duration of compulsory school education from eight to nine years. In May of the same year, compulsory training until the age of 18 was introduced. That requirement can be fulfilled not just in upper secondary school but also by attending regional vocational training or an apprenticeship. A 1998 law completed the process of transferring competences for vocational training to the regions. At the same time the regions are delegating competences to the provinces.

Important reforms seek to expand apprenticeship, which should facilitate the transition to working life, and to introduce higher technical education and training *(istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore — IFTS)* to qualify young diploma-holders with a subsequent integrated path between school and training.

Opportunities for post-secondary and university training are currently being expanded.

Cofunding by the ESF is of major importance for the purposes of regional vocational training in Italy, equivalent to around 70 %.

We are grateful to ISFOL for its fruitful collaboration with Cedefop. We hope that together we have provided the reader with a useful document containing a wealth of information.

Stavros Stavrou
Deputy Director

J. Michael Adams Reinhard Nöbauer
Project coordinators

Thessaloniki, July 1999

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This monograph, commissioned by Cedefop, describes the general reference context for the Italian vocational education and training system and its qualitative and quantitative development.

It consists of six chapters:

- The first outlines the general context of the training system, covering both institutions and social and economic aspects. In particular it gives the most significant facts and figures on demographic trends in Italy, the employment and unemployment rates with a breakdown between the major geographical areas, migration processes, etc. The geographical breakdown is particularly important because there is a very great imbalance between central/northern Italy and southern Italy.
- The second describes the institutional framework of the vocational training system. This highly structured system is the product of Italy's historical development, which is described in outline, and a division of responsibilities between the State and the regions that has only recently begun to be established on a wider scale.
- The third is devoted to a description of the structure of the system, embodied in its laws and regulations and in the quantitative aspects. It sets out the main facts and figures on the vocational training system coming under the regions, as well as the vocational education system coming under the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research.
- The fourth describes expenditure on training. Here again the whole of spending on both public and private vocational training from various sources has been taken into account.
- The fifth is devoted to an analysis of certain qualitative aspects of particular relevance to the vocational training system: certification procedures, guidance and the training of trainers.
- The sixth and last chapter looks at the main innovations occurring within the Italian system.

Among the various factors to be highlighted, there are two in particular that need to be borne in mind if we want to see the Italian vocational training system in its proper context:

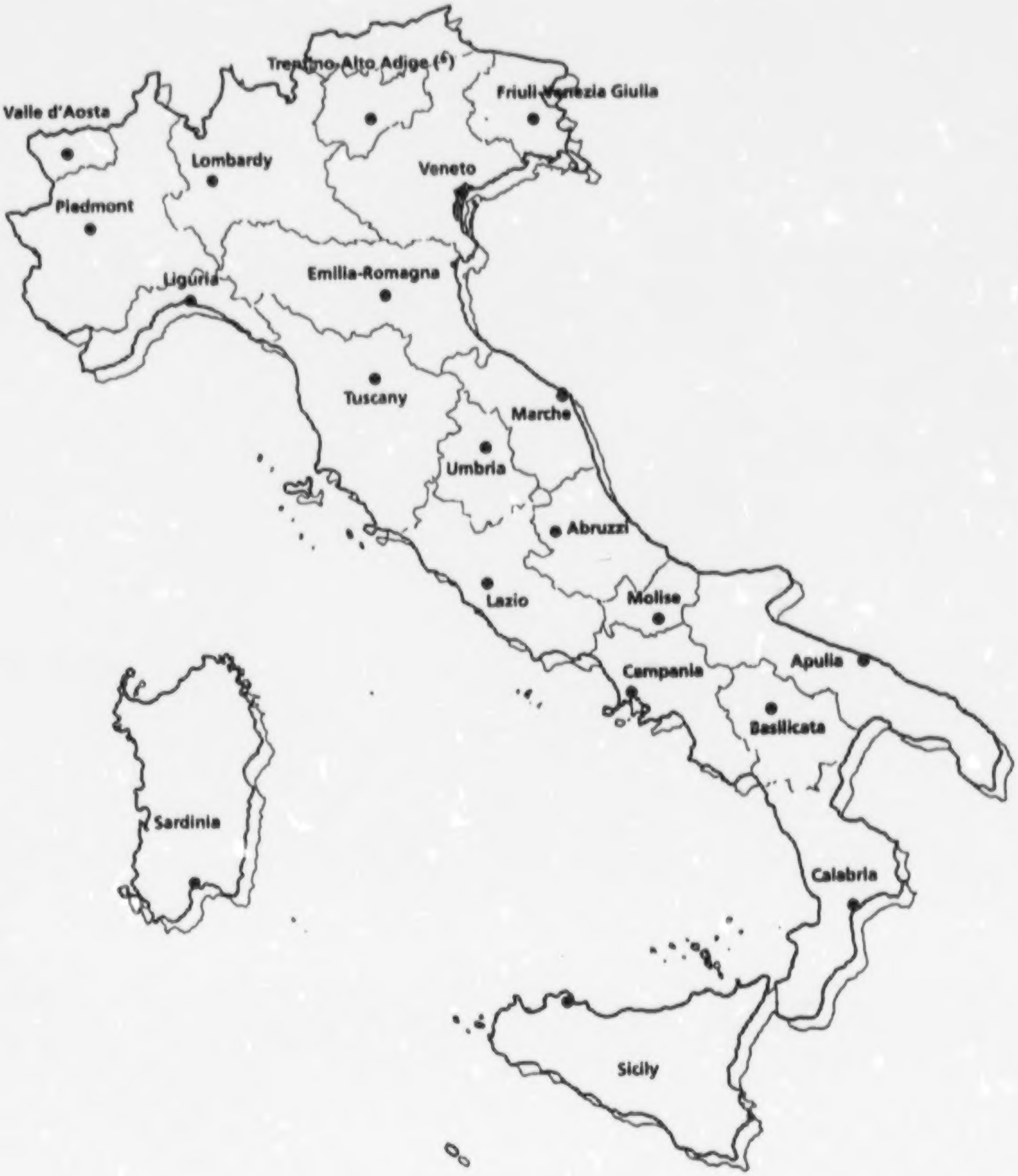
- **The provision of vocational education and training by various institutional bodies:** besides vocational training in the strict sense, which comes under the regions, there is provision of a vocational education nature which is administered by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research. The picture that emerges is then a composite one, so much so that in recent years most of the effort has been directed towards integrating the school system and the training system in the strict sense.
- **The vigorous innovation process promoted by the labour agreement of September 1996,** which is the basis on which a massive body of reform measures has been adopted over the last few years. In this period great concern for innovation, qualification and the development of the training system has emerged. Recent evidence of this has been the 'Social pact for development and employment' (*patto sociale per lo sviluppo e l'occupazione*) signed in December 1998 by the government and the social partners. One of the results of this agreement was approval for the introduction of compulsory training up to the age of 18. The sixth chapter gives an overview of the more significant aspects of this process, but it should be borne in mind that the situation is constantly evolving.

This monograph has been produced from statistics, documentation and research material accumulated by ISFOL, combined with other statistical sources (ISTAT, the Ministry of Labour and the regional authorities) and with further documentation of an international, national and regional nature. The draft text has been discussed and reviewed jointly with the social partners and with Cedefop.

Michele Colasanto
President, ISFOL
Rome, July 1999

Vocational education and training in Italy

Italy and its regions


Trentino-Alto Adige (*)
Friuli-Venezia Giulia
Valle d'Aosta
Lombardy
Veneto
Piedmont
Liguria
Emilia-Romagna
Tuscany
Marche
Umbria
Abruzzi
Lazio
Molise
Apulia
Campania
Basilicata
Sardinia
Calabria
Sicily

(*) The region of Tretino-Alto Adige is divided into two autonomous provinces: the autonomous province of Bolzano and the autonomous province of Trento.

Chapter 1
Background information

1.1. Political and administrative structures

The foundation for the institutional structure of the Italian Republic is its constitution, which came into force on 1 January 1948.

The Italian State is divided into 20 regions. The State has legislative competence for almost all the main issues, including education, whereas the regions have legislative and administrative competence for vocational training and other matters of specifically local significance (agriculture, health, development policies, etc.). Nevertheless, the State retains general guidance functions for these matters as well.

The constitution has granted five regions (Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Valle d'Aosta, Sicily and Sardinia) extensive autonomy, including the area of school education. The Region of Trentino-Alto Adige is divided into two provinces (Trento and Bolzano), which have a broad measure of autonomy.

The State is also structured as provinces and communes, whose task it is to manage and administer various measures associated with local services and needs.

The matters for which the central government has competence are administered by the various ministries. Schools (from nursery school to secondary school, including music conservatories and academies) are administered by the Ministry of Education *(Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione)*, whereas the general administration of the university system comes under the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research *(Ministero dell'Università et della Ricerca)*.

In matters of schooling, the Ministry of Education is responsible for policy on, and the organisation of, the direction, guidance and evaluation of the State public sector education system, the coordination of the local management and implementing bodies *(provveditorati agli studi)* as well as central and local inspection, the proper conduct of examinations of all types at every level of schooling, excluding university examinations, and certification of the attainment of diplomas of primary and first- and second-level secondary schooling in all types of studies.

The provinces, for upper secondary education, and the communes, for other lower levels of schooling, are entrusted with setting up structures for implementing programmes and for the production of plans for the organisation of the network of school establishments and the use of buildings and equipment.

The communes and provinces are also entrusted with measures related to adult education, school and vocational guidance, the promotion of equal educational opportunities and the prevention of dropping out from schooling.

The traditional centralised model for the regulation and management of the provision of education has been amended by Law 59 of 1997 and subsequent regulations, which have considerably reinforced the autonomy of school establishments and provided for the transfer of certain responsibilities in this field to the regions, including the planning of the integrated provision of training.

As regards the university system, the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research is responsible for policy on the development of regulations and teaching methods in the universities and of scientific and technological research, associated with universities or delegated to specialist bodies such as the National Research Council.

12 Here again there is a significant process of gradually assigning responsibilities to universities, which thus take on an independent role within the system.

On the subject of vocational training, Legislative Decree 112/98 has transferred to the regions all the functions and administrative duties formally coming under the Ministry of Labour, except for administrative tasks and functions associated with international relations and the coordination of relations with the European Union on the subject of vocational training, identification of vocational qualification standards (including higher technical training), training credits and the procedure for their certification.

This means that the regions have a broad legislative, directing and management responsibility for such subjects.

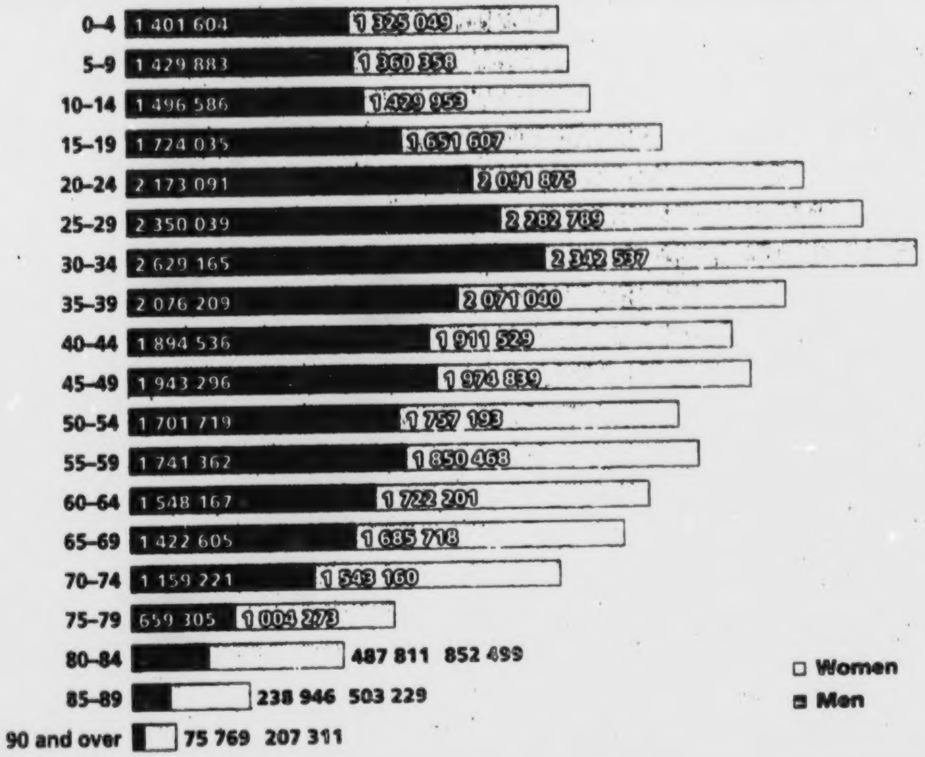
To ensure that training policies are integrated with those on labour, the regions usually delegate to the provinces the functions they have been assigned in the field of vocational training (see Section 2.2.3). The structure of the vocational training system is described in detail in Section 2.2.

1.2. Population

1.2.1. The Italian population

On 1 January 1997, the Italian population was 57 460 977, 29 567 628 of whom were women and 27 893 349 men. The following figure illustrating the distribution of the population by sex and age group, shows that up to the 30–34 age group there are more males than females, that the sexes are more or less in balance in the 35–39 age group, but that the proportions are inverted from the 40–44 age group.

Figure 1. **Population by sex and age group, as of 1 January 1997**



SOURCE: ISTAT.

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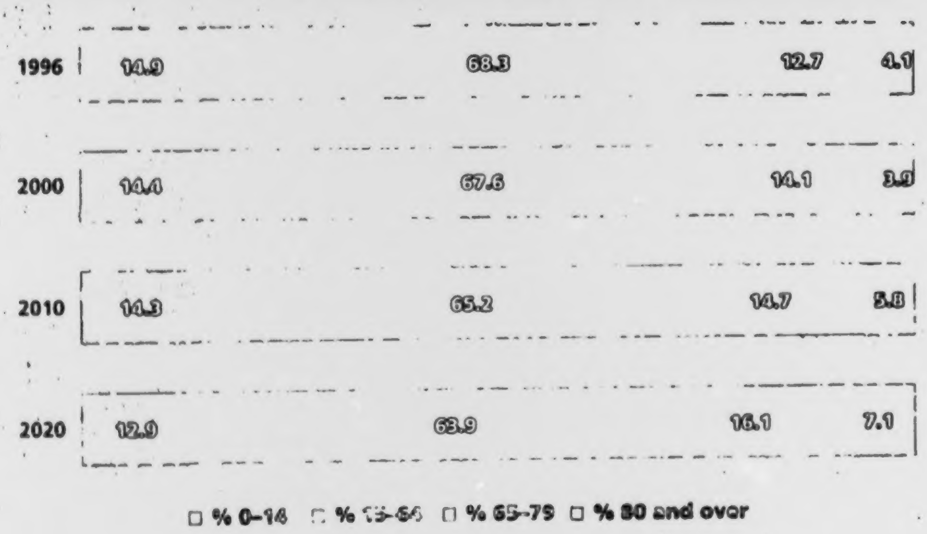
In Italy, as in other western countries, the average age is rising steadily, from 40.3 years in 1996 to the 45.7 predicted by the Central Statistical Institute (*Istituto centrale di statistica — ISTAT*) for 2020. It has also been estimated that in the years 2000, 2010 and 2020 the natural balance between deaths and births in the central and northern regions of Italy will be consistently negative, whereas in the south of Italy this balance will become negative only after 2013.

Figure 2 **Predictions of demographic trends, by macro age group, according to the central hypothesis formulated by ISTAT**



SOURCE: ISTAT.

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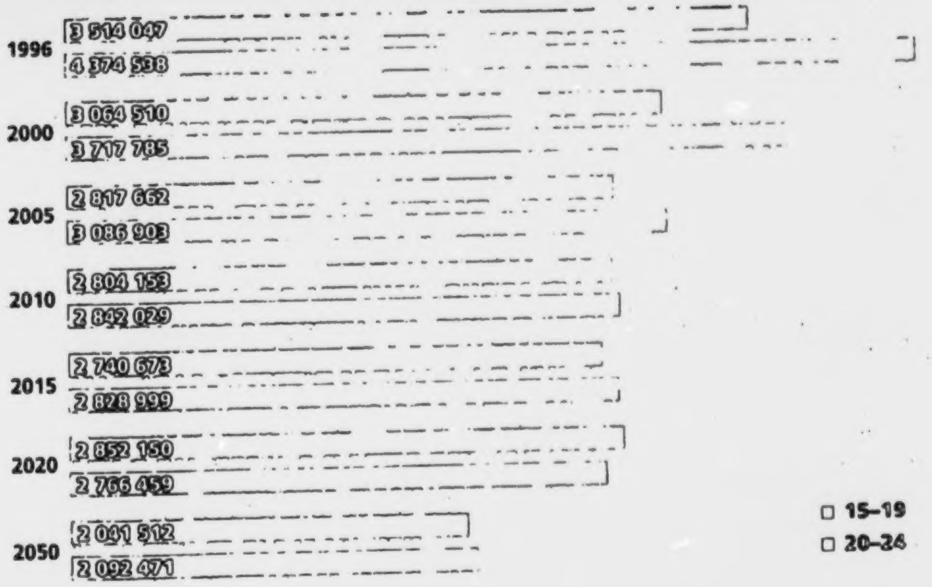
More specifically, the predictions for the 15–19 and 20–24 age groups (where the demographic trends are crucial to the very architecture of the training system), are particularly interesting.

The 15–19 age group falls from 3 514 047 in 1996 to 3 064 510 in 2000, while in 2010 the numbers in this age group will fall to 2 804 153. The reduction in the size of this age group will continue up to 2013, but from the following year there will be an increase which will enlarge it to 2 852 150 in 2020. The prediction has been projected up to 2050, when it is estimated that there will be 2 041 512 people in the age group. In other words, there will be a further prolonged shrinkage in this age bracket.

The 20–24 age group numbered 4 374 538 in 1996, and will decline to 3 717 785 in 2000 and 2 842 029 in 2010. In 2017 for the first time the 20–24 age group will be smaller than the 15–19 age group (the former 2 770 156, the latter 2 822 812) and the situation will remain the same in the years thereafter. In 2050 it is predicted that there will be 2 092 471 young people aged 20 to 24.

The trends described above are shown in the following figure.

Figure 3. **Predicted population trends for the 15–19 and 20–24 age groups, according to the central hypothesis formulated by ISTAT**



SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

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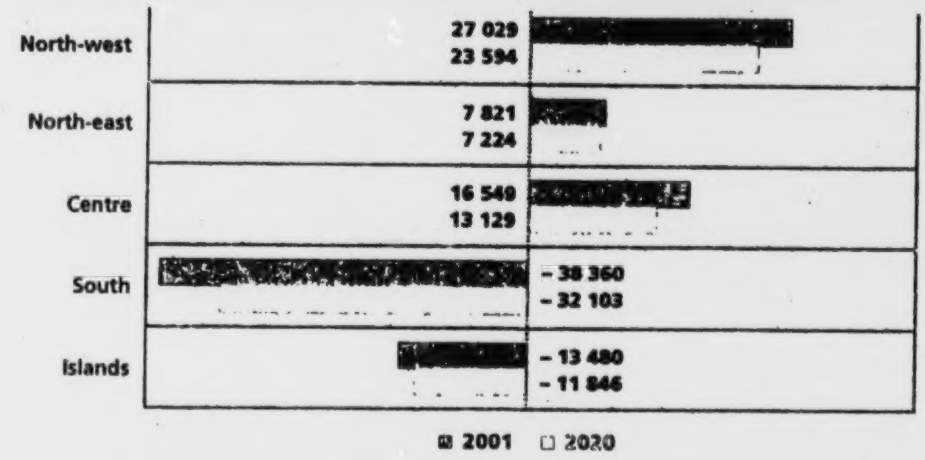
Given the above figures, it is predicted that the geographical distribution of the population will remain more or less stable owing to migration flows from the southern regions of Italy.

Figure 4 **Migration balances according to the central hypothesis formulated by ISTAT, 2001 and 2020**



SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The population is distributed over an area of 301 317.78 km². Population density is one of the highest in continental Europe, 191 people per km² although there are marked geographical differences: the density ranges from 2 657 in the province of Naples at one extreme to 37 at the other, Valle d'Aosta.

Table 1 **The five provinces with the highest and lowest population densities, with the number of communes and the resident population in each, 1996**

Provinces with the highest population density				Provinces with the lowest population density			
Province	**Communes**	**Resident population**	**Density (*)**	**Province**	**Communes**	**Resident population**	**Density (*)**
Naples	92	3 111 114	2 657	Rieti	73	150 734	55
Milan	188	3 728 223	1 881	Sondrio	78	177 281	55
Trieste	6	252 680	1 193	Grosseto	28	216 418	48
Rome	120	3 781 792	707	Nuoro	100	272 505	39
Varese	141	810 625	676	Aosta	74	119 224	37

(*) Inhabitants per km².

SOURCE: ISTAT.

1.2.2. Level of education of the population

The general level of school education is on the average still low, although there is a steady growth in the more highly skilled segments of the population. Immediate confirmation of this can be obtained by comparing the levels of school education in the population in general with those of the labour force, thus showing the raising of qualification levels brought about by the younger generations.

Table 2. **Population and labour force, by level of education certificate, 1981, 1991 and 1995–97 in %**

Population (*)	**1981**	**1991**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
No certificate/elementary school certificate	(**)	39.9	35.5	33.9	32.5
Certificate of lower secondary education	(**)	35.3	33.6	34.0	34.2
Certificate of upper secondary education	(**)	20.6	25.2	26.1	27.2
Degree	(**)	4.2	5.7	6.0	6.2
Workforce (*)					
No certificate/elementary school certificate	48.5	24.8	19.7	16.6	15.1
Certificate of lower secondary education	30.1	40.1	40.8	38.0	37.9
Certificate of upper secondary education	16.5	28.0	30.4	35.3	36.6
Degree	4.9	7.2	9.0	10.1	10.4

(*) The figures refer to the population aged 15 and over.
(**) Data not available.

SOURCE: ISTAT MINISTRY OF EDUCATION FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The overall progress in school education is also testified by the fact that today a consistent percentage of 95 % of young people obtain the certificate of lower secondary education (which until the 1998/99 school year represented the end of compulsory schooling), and over 90 % of these go on to the first year of upper secondary school education (which has been compulsory since the 1999/2000 school year for those who have not turned 16). Over 80 % of young people between 14 and 18 attend upper secondary schools, and in 1997 the percentage of those passing their upper secondary school-leaving certificate rose to 70 % of the 18–20 age group. There has also been a rise in the proportion of young people in the 19–23 age group enrolling for university from just over 25 % in 1981 to 45 % in 1998.

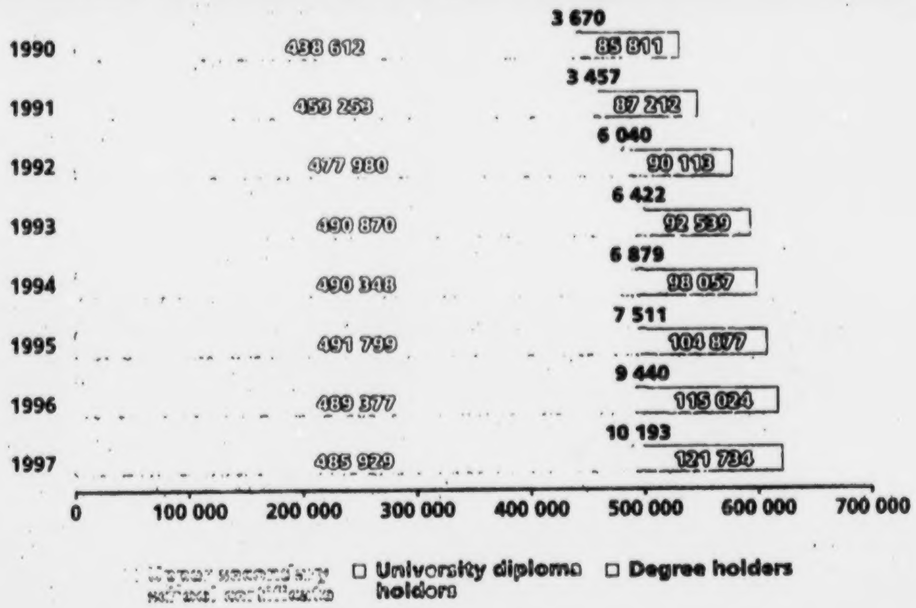


Figure 5. **Number of higher level education certificates obtained, in absolute figures and by type of certificate, 1990–97**

SOURCE: ISTAT — MINISTRY OF UNIVERSITIES AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The percentage of young people enrolling for level 1 vocational training and apprenticeship has remained constant, whereas there has been an increase in enrolment for level 2 vocational training courses. A detailed quantitative analysis of the process of school education is given in Chapter 3.

Despite the undeniable progress outlined here, it would be unreasonable to expect that the qualifications of the labour force could reach the same levels as in other developed countries in the near term, since the gap in school attendance has been too wide for too long.

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In 1996/97, according to ISFOL findings, 21 132 regional training courses were started up, catering for a total of 406 920 trainees. The following table shows the numbers broken down by course level from the end of the 1980s.

Table 3. **Trainees in vocational training, by training level**

Year	Trainees	
	Initial training (*)	**Continuing training**
1988/89	251 380	118 009
1989/90	237 312	101 415
1990/91	250 019	130 554
1991/92	251 425	138 860
1992/93	238 765	102 850
1993/94	256 744	101 698
1994/95	244 751	128 278
1995/96	205 682	173 278
1996/97	205 917	201 003

(*) Including courses for special categories.

SOURCE: ISFOL AND ISTAT.

1.2.3. Immigration

There is a steady increase in the number of non-Italian nationals in Italy, mainly because of the inflow from countries where there are strong migratory measures. While on 1 January 1994 the percentage of citizens from such countries compared with the total number of foreigners in Italy was estimated at about 73.2 %, ISTAT figures for 1 January 1997 estimate that the percentage was about 79.5 %.

Table 4. **Foreign citizens resident in Italy by geographical area of origin, as of 1 January 1994 to 1997**

Area of origin	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
Europe (EC)	120 329	124 917	128 483	133 511
Europe (non-EC)	118 503	143 547	166 456	211 957
Africa	211 416	227 363	241 075	296 344
Asia	106 286	113 929	122 696	150 995
America	69 064	72 426	75 837	88 440
Oceania	3 103	2 885	2 821	2 941
Stateless	464	402	335	367
Total	**629 165**	**685 469**	**737 703**	**884 555**

SOURCE: ISTAT.

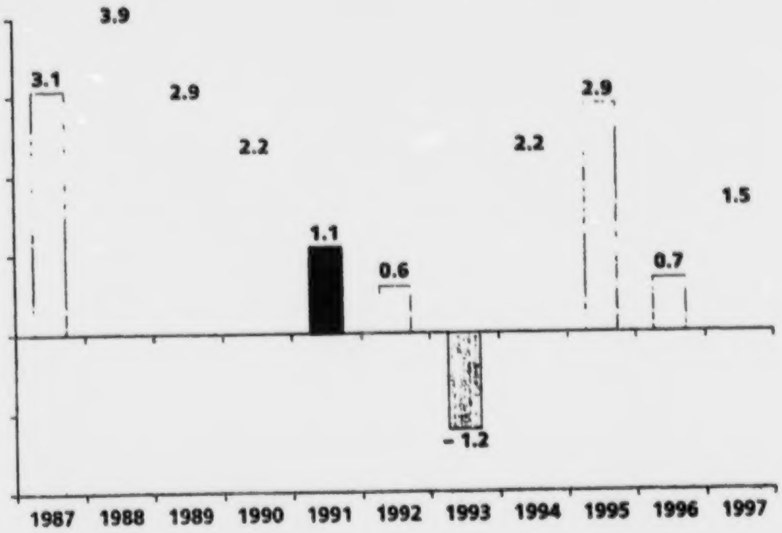
1.3. The economy and the labour force

1.3.1. The economy

In 1997 Italy's gross domestic product grew in real terms by 1.5 %, compared with 0.7 % in the previous year. The increase in the GDP was wholly due to the internal components of demand, a quite considerable factor being the process of reconstituting stocks. End consumption by households rose by 2.4 % over 1996, a figure strongly influenced by the government policy of offering incentives for the purchase of new cars. If the item headed 'purchase of means of transport' were deducted from the overall figure, the increase would be 1.4 %, more in line with the trends observed in 1994 and 1995. The gradual revival in the economy was accompanied by a slight increase in gross fixed capital formation (+ 0.6 %), confirming that for the time being there appears to be no significant expansion in the production base.

Economic progress is not found in every sector. While there has been an increase in the real added value reported by industry and direct services for sale, in agriculture and the building industry this value has fallen.

Figure 6. **Changes in gross domestic product compared with the previous year, expressed in real terms**



SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The balance of payments, as has been the case over the past five years, was positive in 1997, although less than in the previous year. This erosion in the balance of trade is attributable to the higher growth in imports compared with the volume of exports. As for the latter, it should be pointed out that, after suffering from the effect of the appreciation of the lira in 1996 and the early months of 1997, exports recovered some of their competitiveness in the second half of 1997. In particular, Italy has stepped up its exports to countries outside the EU and growth has been achieved in virtually every major sector of manufacturing industry. Another interesting finding is that the regions of southern Italy, which have left the 1996 slump behind them, have increased their exports by twice the national average.

Table 5. **Balance of payments, 1992–97, (in billion ITL — 1997 values)**

	1992	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
Current transactions	*– 36 194*	*15 222*	*22 573*	*41 018*	*63 243*	*56 490*
Goods and services	– 6 123	40 681	42 452	51 967	75 743	61 781
Consumption	5 991	12 480	18 761	22 941	22 141	22 636
Earnings	– 26 267	– 26 466	– 27 342	– 26 221	– 23 386	– 20 809
Net indirect taxation	– 3 059	– 2 963	– 5 345	– 4 805	– 3 499	– 32
Transfers	– 6 736	– 8 510	– 5 953	– 2 864	– 7 756	– 7 086
Capital account transactions	*958*	*2 598*	*1 756*	*2 711*	*111*	*5 431*
Total	**– 35 236**	**17 820**	**24 329**	**43 729**	**63 354**	**61 921**
Value in euro(*)	*– 18 197*	*9 203*	*12 564*	*22 584*	*32 720*	*31 979*

(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27

SOURCE: *ISCO, RELAZIONE GENERALE SULLA SITUAZIONE ECONOMICA DEL PAESE (1997).*

Monetary policy directives on the one hand and moderation in the cost of labour on the other led to inflation levels not seen since the late 1960s, confirming that Italy now has a low-inflation economy. The convergence of levels of inflation towards those of Italy's main European partners has in fact been achieved. The harmonised retail price index, measured by the Maastricht criteria, changed by 1.9 % in 1997, aligning itself with the average for the EU (1.7 %). The fall in inflation was particularly rapid in the first part of the year in question, whereas in the second half there was a further rise in prices, although moderate. It should be pointed out that the stabilisation of consumer inflation was also due to the changing attitudes of operators in commercial distribution. Reorganisation of the commercial structure and the uncertain prospects for major components of consumption in fact placed a curb on both the pressures on prices in the first stages of marketing and the side effects of changes to the VAT rates.

In this context household income rose by a nominal amount of 2.6 %, although with 2.5 % consumer deflation it is obvious that families' spending power remained more or less stable.

The fall in interest rates affected movements in net interest, which in turn influenced the general reduction in capital earnings. The pressure of general and current taxation has also increased. In 1996 current income and wealth taxes, as well as contributions and indirect (but not VAT) taxes amounted to 27.8 % of taxable income, compared with 28.5 % in 1997.

1.3.2. The labour force

1.3.2.1. Employment

In 1997 the labour force was 22 891 000 (14 206 000 men and 8 685 000 women), equivalent to 40.3 % of the population, a figure which places Italy at the bottom of the scale among developed countries.

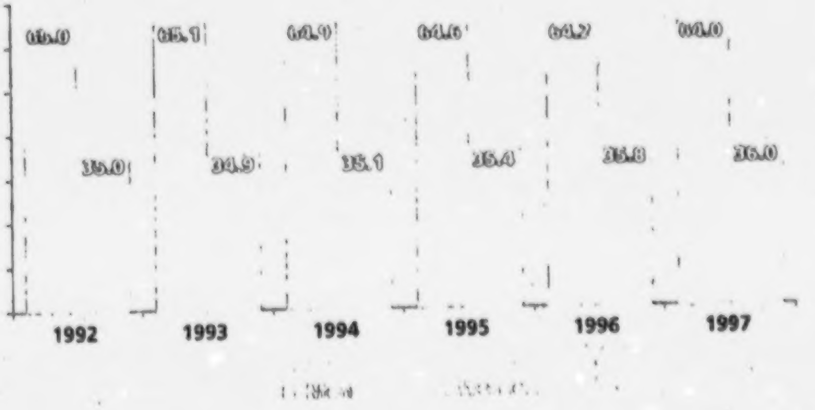
Table 6. **Labour force, as % of the total population, by sex, 1993–97**

Year	Men	Women	Total
1993	52.1	28.4	39.9
1994	52.1	28.8	40.1
1995	51.7	29.2	40.1
1996	51.5	29.6	40.3
1997	51.3	29.8	40.3

SOURCE: ISTAT.

The relative size of the female component of the labour force is steadily increasing. This trend, although slow, is bringing Italy into line with European averages, where the proportion of women in the working population has consistently stood several percentage points higher than in Italy. In further confirmation of this, it should be noted that, despite the fact that the population of women has been increasing over the past few years, there has been a constant decrease in the number of women registered as not being in the workforce. Furthermore a growing proportion of women is not working due to the fact that they are studying, which means they will join the labour force at a later date.

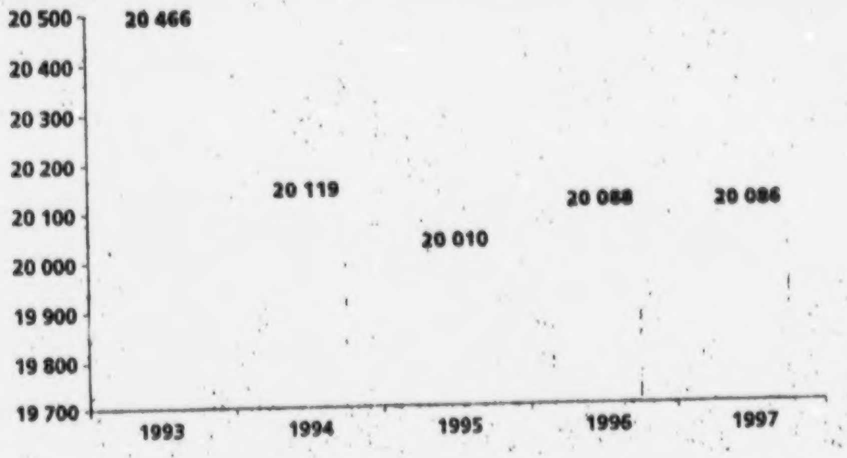
Figure 7 **Labour force by sex, 1992–97, as % of total population**



SOURCE: ISTAT.

Turning to employment trends, it is evident that the gradual revival of production activities in 1997 has not altered the size of the labour market. According to the annual average observed in ISTAT investigations, the number of people in employment is 20 086 000, virtually the same figure as in the previous year.

Figure 8 **Persons employed, based on the annual average found in ISTAT surveys from 1993–97 (in thousands)**



SOURCE: ISTAT.

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Of greater interest is the changing pattern of internal components, with changes in trends at geographical and sector level. In the first six months of 1997, it was in southern Italy that the results were the most encouraging, whereas in the northern part of the country the situation remained more or less the same. In the second half of the year, on the other hand, there was a marked fall in the south (offsetting the progress made during the first half of the year), with a general improvement in employment in the north. This has broadened the existing gap between the two areas of the country.

Table 7. **Employment by sex and sector as % of total number employed, 1993-97**

Year	Agriculture			Industry			Other activities		
	Men	**Women**	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**
1993	5.0	3.0	8.0	25.1	7.9	33.0	34.9	24.1	59.0
1994	5.0	2.9	7.9	25.0	7.8	32.8	35.0	24.3	59.3
1995	4.6	2.7	7.3	24.7	7.8	32.5	35.2	25.0	60.2
1996	4.6	2.4	7.0	24.5	7.8	32.3	35.2	25.5	60.7
1997	4.5	2.3	6.8	24.3	7.8	32.1	35.2	25.9	61.1

SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

Reviewing the various sectors, we note that there has been a marked and steady decline in agriculture. There are internal imbalances in industry, whereas the tertiary sector as a whole offsets the losses in the other two sectors.

The agricultural sector is in the middle of a structural collapse. In 1997, there were about 300 000 fewer people working on the land than in 1993.

The overall results in the industrial sector were negative, mainly due to the trend in the first half of 1997, although in the second half of the year there was a gradual revival. Particularly in manufacturing industry, production, turnover and the number of orders grew, so that employment in this sector expanded at rates reminiscent of the late 1980s.

In 1997, services was the only sector that to an extent performed the role of expanding employment as a whole, continuing a tendency already encountered in 1995 and 1996. There was steady growth in the production of services for enterprises (+ 7.8 %). In the hotel and catering trades, slight progress was recorded; in financial services and in commerce there was structural change which led to a reduction in self-employment and more or less stagnation in the level of those employed. Employment trends in public administration and the health and education sectors are negative.

1.3.2.2. Unemployment

In 1997, the rate of unemployment was 12.3 %, reflecting a further increase over 1996, when it stood at 12.1 %. Since the early 1990s, there has been a 1.3 % increase in unemployment. In 1997, there were 2 805 000 people unemployed, of whom 1 225 000 were first-time jobseekers.

These figures illustrate a trend that in itself gives cause for concern, although it is not very far from the percentages for the EU as a whole. The scale of the problem (and as a result the extent of social tension it induces) alters when we break down the findings by geographical area, age and sex, an operation that reveals an extremely complex situation.

The first appraisal is of the geographical distribution of unemployment. Northern Italy has unemployment rates that are lower than the European average, the rates in central Italy are more or less in line with the European average and southern Italy has very much higher rates.

Table 8. **Unemployment by geographical area, 1990 and 1995–97, (in %)**

Geographical area (*)	**1990**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
North-west	5.4	7.4	7.3	7.3
North-east	4.8	5.9	5.6	5.7
Centre	9.9	10.3	10.3	10.2
South	19.7	21.0	21.7	22.2
Italy	**11.0**	**12.0**	**12.1**	**12.3**

(*) Figures refer to the population aged 15 and over.

SOURCE: ***ISTAT.***

Compared with 1990, unemployment rates have risen throughout Italy. In the north-west, during the 1990s, the number of unemployed has risen by 1.9 %, although the trend seems to have levelled off since 1994. In north-eastern Italy, the area with the lowest levels of unemployment, the figure has increased by 0.9 % over the period of time in question but, as in the north-west, the situation seems to have stabilised. In central Italy the situation has been less regular in that in 1993 the unemployment rate stood at 8.7 %, lower than in 1990, but 1994 was a truly black year, with the percentage rising to 9.6 %. In 1995 there was one last increase, after which the trend in the centre seemed to reach a point of equilibrium as elsewhere. Southern Italy is the area in greatest difficulty, because unemployment there has assumed the dimensions of a true emergency, above all because the figures show that the trend is due to continue. In 1997, unemployment reached 22.2 %, an increase of 0.5 % over the previous year.

The above demonstrates the profound imbalances among the various geographical areas and emphasises that the gap between north and south is still widening rather than narrowing. Rather than looking at the overall unemployment rate of 12.3 %, it would be more relevant to point to the divergences within the country and to say that unemployment rates (ISTAT for 1997) were 6.6 % in the north and 22.2 % in the south. Half way between these extremes come the regions of central Italy, whose unemployment rate of 10.2 % is more or less in line with the EU average.

Youth unemployment is another of the critical issues that employment policies have to tackle. Compared with the average rate of 12.3 % mentioned above, the unemployment rate for young people aged between 15 and 29 is 26.1 %, a figure that places Italy in the last but one position among the EU Member States, followed only by Greece. In 1997, out of the 2 805 000 people seeking jobs, 1 690 000 were in the 15–29 age group, i.e. no less than 60.2 %.

A breakdown of the age groups into more appropriate subgroups (more closely reflecting the cycles of education and training) shows that the unemployment rate is steadily declining only in the 15–19 age group. This is in line with the overall reduction in the rates of activity among young people due to the growing proportion staying on in education. In 1990 the unemployment rate for the 15–19 age group was 38.6 %, whereas in 1997 it fell to 35.9 %. In the 20–24 age group, the rate was 28.3 % in 1990. By 1995 this had risen to 32.7 % and by 1996 to 33.1 %. In 1997 it fell back again to 32.7 %. This reversal of the trend could be the preliminary outcome of active policies to promote employment. It could also be a sign of Italy's economic revival in 1997. It should be borne in mind, however, that a similar result did not occur in the 25–29 age group, where there has been a steady and constant rise in the rate of unemployment over a period of time.

Youth unemployment is not evenly distributed throughout the country. Of all the 15–29 year olds in search of employment, 26 % are in the north of the country, 16.9 % in central Italy and 57.1 % in southern Italy.

Table 9. **Youth unemployment, 1990 and 1995–97 (in %)**

Age group	**1990**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
15–19 years	38.6	37.6	36.0	35.9
of whom first-time jobseekers	*27.8*	*26.3*	*24.9*	*24.5*
20–24 years	28.3	32.7	33.1	32.7
of whom first-time jobseekers	*18.1*	*19.8*	*20.8*	*20.5*
25–29 years	16.8	18.2	18.3	19.3
of whom first-time jobseekers	*8.1*	*8.5*	*9.0*	*9.8*
Total 15–29 years	24.7	25.8	25.8	26.1
of whom first-time jobseekers	*15.1*	*14.8*	*15.2*	*15.4*
Total population	**11.0**	**12.0**	**12.1**	**12.3**
of whom first-time jobseekers	*5.3*	*5.0*	*5.3*	*5.4*

SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

In 1997, the rate of female unemployment was 16.8 %, compared with 9.5 % for men. This factor is considered by many to be a result of the lack of flexibility in the Italian labour market, which has been unable to bring into operation elementary mechanisms to restore the equilibrium where there has been an excess supply of labour. In the case of women, this excess is a consequence of longer school attendance and greater participation in the market. It should also be borne in mind that up to 1997 the female component of the labour force was lower than the European level by several percentage points. This situation could alter in the very near future and come into line with Community averages, introducing further pressures into the system due to unemployment, especially in the area of the country — the southern regions — whose situation, as we have seen, is already causing concern.

Table 10. Unemployment by sex, 1993–97 (in %)

Year	Men	*of whom first-time jobseekers*	Women	*of whom first-time jobseekers*
1993	7.6	*3.6*	14.8	*5.8*
1994	8.7	*3.9*	15.6	*5.9*
1995	9.2	*4.2*	16.7	*6.5*
1996	9.4	*4.4*	16.6	*6.7*
1997	9.5	*4.5*	16.8	*6.8*

SOURCE: *ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.*

An analysis of the rate of unemployment broken down by certificates of education shows that the level of education has become of decisive importance over the past few years, not so much in entering the working world as in not leaving it or in finding work more easily when a previous job has been lost. It has been observed that the unemployment rate rises steadily (sometimes even dizzily) among those with the lowest level of certificate, and that the unemployment rate is more or less stable among those who have upper secondary education or university diplomas.

Table 11. Unemployment by level of education, 1990 and 1995–97 (in %)

Certificate of education (*)	1990	1995	1996	1997
No certificate/elementary school certificate	7.5	9.7	10.2	10.7
Certificate of lower secondary education	12.3	12.9	13.1	13.2
Certificate of upper secondary education	14.0	13.3	13.2	13.1
Degree	5.3	7.8	7.7	7.8

(*) The data refer to the population aged 15 and over.

SOURCE: *ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.*

The analysis, if it is confined to the last three years, confirms that young people without a certificate or at most with an elementary schooling certificate in 1995 amounted to 18.2 % of the labour force, with an unemployment rate of 9.7 %; and in 1996, their percentage compared with the total labour force fell to 16.6 %, but the unemployment rate rose to 10.2 %. In 1997, the percentage fell even further (15.1 %) but the unemployment rate continued to rise to about 10.7 %. The trends for those completing the cycle of education and acquiring a certificate of lower secondary education were roughly similar. In 1995, these accounted for 38.0 % of the labour force, with an unemployment rate of 12.9 %. In 1997, the percentage remained more or less unchanged (37.9 %) but the unemployment rate rose to 13.2 %. The trends were reversed among those holding a diploma of upper secondary education: in 1995, these amounted to 34.1 % of the labour force and their unemployment rate was 13.3 %; and, in 1997, this stood at 36.6 % with an unemployment rate of 13.1 %. Those having a university diploma in 1995 accounted for 9.7 % of the labour force and in 1997 the percentage had risen to 10.4 %, with the same unemployment rate, 7.8 %.

Unlike other economically developed countries, in Italy there are no substantial differences in levels of employment for comparable age groups and levels of education. Other analyses have also shown that generally graduates enter the working world at grades that in fact require lower qualifications. Their qualifications may help them in their subsequent career development, where greater weight is attached to the body of experience they have acquired (1).

In conclusion, to provide a more comprehensive review of the Italian labour market, the following figures relate to foreign citizens from countries outside the EU. In 1996 those registering with the job placement office amounted to 42.2 % more than in the previous year, reaching the figure of 139 942. In about eight cases out of ten, these registrations were in central and northern Italy.

Table 12. **Non-EU citizens, registered as jobseekers, by geographical area, type of registration and sex, 1996**

	Cessation of previous job		First-time jobseekers		
Geographical areas	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**
North-west	24 816	10 010	18 312	7 727	60 865
North-east	8 772	3 262	2 406	2 447	16 887
Centre	12 444	5 885	9 247	5 706	33 282
South	6 726	1 984	4 924	1 562	15 196
Islands	7 447	1 982	2 172	520	12 121
Total	**60 205**	**23 123**	**37 061**	**17 962**	**138 351**

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF LABOUR FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL

In 1996, the number of non-Community citizens who started work was 129 506, 16.4 % higher than in 1995. Here again this trend was strong in central and northern Italy (87 % of the total).

Table 13. **Non-EU citizens finding jobs, by geographical area, job status and sex, 1996**

	Unskilled workers		Semi-skilled workers		Skilled workers		White collar workers	
Geographical area	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**
North-west	31 193	6 147	7 766	2 224	1 964	1 331	587	474
North-east	22 957	5 603	6 777	2 089	1 238	110	394	252
Centre	12 964	2 779	4 007	1 312	319	74	147	160
South	6 999	1 466	692	114	54	4	52	39
Islands	5 620	778	473	193	85	22	33	14
Total	**79 733**	**16 773**	**19 715**	**5 932**	**3 660**	**1 541**	**1 213**	**939**

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF LABOUR FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL

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(1) Cf. Istat, *Inserimento professionale dei laureati*, 1995 survey.

Chapter 2
History and the laws and regulations governing the system

2.1. The historical development of the system

2.1.1. Education

The origins of the modern educational system in Italy go back to the *Casati* Law of 1861, the year in which the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed. This law established that elementary schooling was free of charge, compulsory and unified. For secondary education, it confirmed the separation between schools providing an education in the humanities (the *liceo*) and technical schools.

In 1923, the *Gentile* reform introduced a supplementary three-year period of school education (lower secondary school) following on elementary school, side by side with 'complementary' schools for initial vocational training, which took over from the technical schools. The compulsory school-leaving age was raised to 14.

In the 1930s, the picture of the modern system of education was completed with the establishment of technical institutes (1931) and vocational institutes (1938) in upper secondary education.

The constitutional charter, which came into force on 1 January 1948, established the general framework for the training system. It declared that the Republic was to play a central role in the education, training and vocational development of workers and confirmed that at least eight years' education would be compulsory and free of charge. Lastly it introduced the distinction between education in the school, for which the State was responsible, and vocational training, for which the regions were responsible.

Immediately after the constitution of the Republic, one of the most urgent needs for reform was in the curricula for elementary and lower secondary schools. It was not until 1955, however, that new curricula were defined for elementary schools and not until 1962 that the new single unified, free and compulsory lower secondary school was established, taking over from the vocational training schools as well.

Between the late 1950s and the early 1960s, with the take-off of industry and the explosive economic boom, Italy was faced with the need to link school education with the labour market and with the demands generated by an expanding production system, so that the educational system could provide the country with a well grounded labour force. The lively debate that raged over those years on the reform of the upper secondary school supported the gradual 'de-vocationalisation' of school education, with the tendency to delegate vocational training in the strict sense of the term to employers, or at least to agencies outside the school.

In 1968, the student body was highly critical of the selectiveness of schooling. One outcome of this youth protest movement was that anyone obtaining a certificate of education from any type of upper secondary school was allowed to enrol in any university faculty without any restriction on their choice.

The next few decades were to be characterised by substantial inertia. Many reforms were proposed for the various types of school in the system, but no action was taken on them. It was not until 1990 that the reform of the elementary school was completed. That same year saw the reform of the teaching regulations of universities and the institution of short university diplomas. At the time of writing, upper secondary education has not yet been reformed, although major experiments in this field have been launched.

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The Italian school system is, however, passing through a period of great innovation. Early in 1997 the Ministry of Education presented a plan to reorganise the cycles of education which was to reshape radically the structure of the educational system. On 19 January 1999 Parliament approved the raising of the minimum school-leaving age to 15 and on 17 May 1999 it approved the extension of the obligation to continue in education and vocational training up to the age of 18. The latter obligation can be performed either in the school system or in full-time vocational training and apprenticeship.

2.1.2. Vocational training

In the constitutional charter, the Republican State sets vocational training as one of its planning objectives (Article 35), with the undertaking to provide for 'the training and the vocational development of workers'. It attaches a very broad range of educational, cultural and moral values to the concept of training, besides strictly vocational ones.

In the immediate post-war period, the demands of reconstruction and the pressing need to put the country's production system on its feet again were the inspiration for measures offering short practical instruction and training in the initial levels of skills. The aim was rapidly to produce a pool of manpower geared to the current changes in the industrial system.

Law 264 of 1949 for the first time regulated the subject of vocational instruction. Up to the 1970s it remained the main legislation regulating the system.

Under the law, training measures were directed at an exclusively adult target group. The measures adopted by the Ministry of Labour were directed primarily at 'the vocational instruction, qualification, refresher training and retraining of unemployed workers'. A second type of training was designed to provide further qualifications for those already in employment up to the age of 45.

The organisation of vocational training courses was assigned to the public sector authorities, in particular through large quasi-State bodies — Inacli (*Istituto Nazionale dei Lavoratori dell'Industria*) and Enalc (*Ente Nazionale Addestramento dei Lavoratori del Commercio*), and later, in 1958, also to Iniasa (for craft trades) — as well as to various types and forms of agencies, institutions, associations and training centres.

On emerging from the early years of post-war reconstruction, the most urgent task was to deal with the very young people coming on to the labour market without adequate preparation for working life. Law 456 of 1951 extended vocational training courses to young people as well as to adults, shifting the focus of concern towards this vast catchment area and laying the foundations for the development of initial vocational training, later to become the largest segment of the whole Italian vocational training system.

In 1955, apprenticeship, which required apprentices to attend training courses in addition to the practical instruction received on the shop floor, was introduced.

With training being opened to younger people and the introduction of an additional function outside the school, the emerging vocational training system was forced to structure itself as long, linked courses, whose programmes of studies were adapted from the curricula of the State vocational institutes.

History and the laws and regulations governing the system

In 1957, with the birth of the European Economic Community, the Treaty of Rome established the European Social Fund (Article 123) and formulated general principles for the implementation of a common vocational training policy. One of the aims was to encourage the 'harmonious development of national economies and the common market'.

The European Social Fund, which became operational in 1960, was to play an ever-growing role in the development of vocational training in Italy, a role that — as we shall see — has now become vital.

The vocational training system lacked any systematic body of regulations until 1972 when, following the constitution of the regions, that part of the constitutional mandate dealing with 'craft and vocational instruction' (Article 117) was implemented, this being one of the subjects over which the regions were to exercise legislative power.

Decree 616 of 24 July 1977, which implemented the transfer of responsibilities, defined the subject as: *'those services and activities directed towards the training, further training, retraining and vocational guidance, for any vocational activity and for any purpose, including continuing, recurring and permanent training, (...) except for those activities directed towards the attainment of a certificate of studies or a diploma of upper secondary, university or post-university education'*.

The transfer to the regions was not sufficient to bring about a unified regulation of the sector and as a result Outline Law 845 was enacted in 1978. This gave the Government a guidance and coordination role, and, within this general framework, allowed each region to act independently and in accordance with its own policy guidelines.

The objective of decentralisation was to make the system more flexible and more closely geared to local requirements, in line with the production systems in the area. Over the years, the broad autonomy allowed to the regional authorities has resulted in a highly differentiated system.

The regions are responsible for both initial and continuing vocational training, but for a long time the system was to remain basically directed towards the target group of young people without any qualifications, the main function being to provide them with remedial education.

Because of this approach by the regions to initial training activities and the absence of a specific fund to finance continuing vocational training, for a long time Italy had no organic, structured system of continuing vocational training for the benefit of employers, young people, workers, the unemployed and permanently jobless adults.

In the second half of the 1980s, new developments in production processes and the resulting organisational changes boosted the demand for skilled technicians, gradually directing regional provision towards level 2 training, i.e. post-secondary education diploma training.

In the 1990s, recognition of training as a strategic resource for both employers and workers was generally more widespread in the public sector and among the social partners which — above all at confederation level — stressed the need to improve the Italian education and training system, with particular reference to continuing vocational training.

The pressures for reform were first reflected in Law 236 of 1993, which launched the systematic organisation of continuing vocational training and recognised the principle of consultation between the State, the regions and the social partners.

The Law regarded vocational training as a service of social value that would promote socioeconomic and employment development. It tackled the problem of financial resources by allocating one third of the resources derived from the employers' contribution of 0.30 % of their wage bills, to vocational training measures.

The Law allowed the following to be funded by means of this levy:

- continuing vocational training, updating or retraining measures for training practitioners employed by vocational training agencies;
- continuing vocational training measures for workers employed in companies benefiting from extraordinary support supplementing the wages of their workforce;
- retraining or vocational updating measures for employees of companies contributing not less than 20 % of the cost of the activities;
- vocational training measures directed towards workers on job mobility registers.

The labour agreement, signed by the government and the social partners in September 1996, set out the strategy for the reform and reorganisation of the vocational training system. The reform proposals already made in the 1993 labour pact were restated in a systematic approach, of which the key points were:

- raising the minimum school-leaving age;
- the right to training up to the age of 18;
- greater stress on training objectives in training/work contracts and in apprenticeship;
- support for wider recourse to work placements throughout the training system; and
- the development of continuing vocational training.

With particular reference to continuing vocational training, which was specifically regarded as 'the new strategic outlook for training', the agreement proposed a flexible approach that would meet the objectives of anticipating needs for skills, retraining and refresher training.

Triggered off by the labour agreement, Law 196 of 24 June 1997 — better known as the 'Treu package' after the Labour Minister who promoted it — sets out the premises and general lines for an overall reform of the vocational training system.

The details of the new outline body of regulations were referred back to the government for definition through the issue of one or more regulatory decrees. The decrees on apprenticeship and placements have now been issued, whereas the decree on the overall reform of the vocational training system has been drawn up, but not yet approved. Its key points are:

- redefinition of the tasks of the State after Legislative Decree 112/98 confirmed that the regions have primary responsibility for vocational training, while the State retains certain residual functions;
- streamlining of procedures;
- introduction of accreditation for training bodies;

Table 14. **Development of education and vocational training — a summary**

Year	Measure
1861	*Casati* Law: first law on education
1923	*Gentile* reform: minimum compulsory school-leaving age set at 14
1931	Establishment of technical institutes
1938	Establishment of vocational education institutes
1948	Constitution of the Republic comes into force
1949	Law on job placement and vocational training
1951	Extension of vocational training courses to young people
1955	Definition of new curricula for elementary schools
	Law introducing apprenticeship
1962	Establishment of a new unified lower secondary school
1968	Establishment of State nursery schools
1969	Reform of the upper secondary education examination and liberalisation of access to university
1972	Transfer of responsibility for training to the regions
1974	Recognition of workers' right to training leave
1977	Introduction of training/work contracts
1978	Outline law on vocational training
1990	Reform of elementary schools
	Reform of university regulations: introduction of university diplomas
1992	Launching of university diplomas
	Project 92: reform of vocational institutes
1993	Labour pact
	Law 236: support for employment and launching of the organisation of the continuing vocational training system
1996	Labour agreement
1997	Law 196: guidelines for the reform of the vocational training system; reform of apprenticeship and training placements
	Plan to reorganise upper secondary schools
1998	Legislative Decree 112: definition of the role of the regions and the State in vocational training
	Social pact on development and employment
1999	Raising of minimum school-leaving age to 15
	Raising of age for compulsory schooling and vocational training to 18

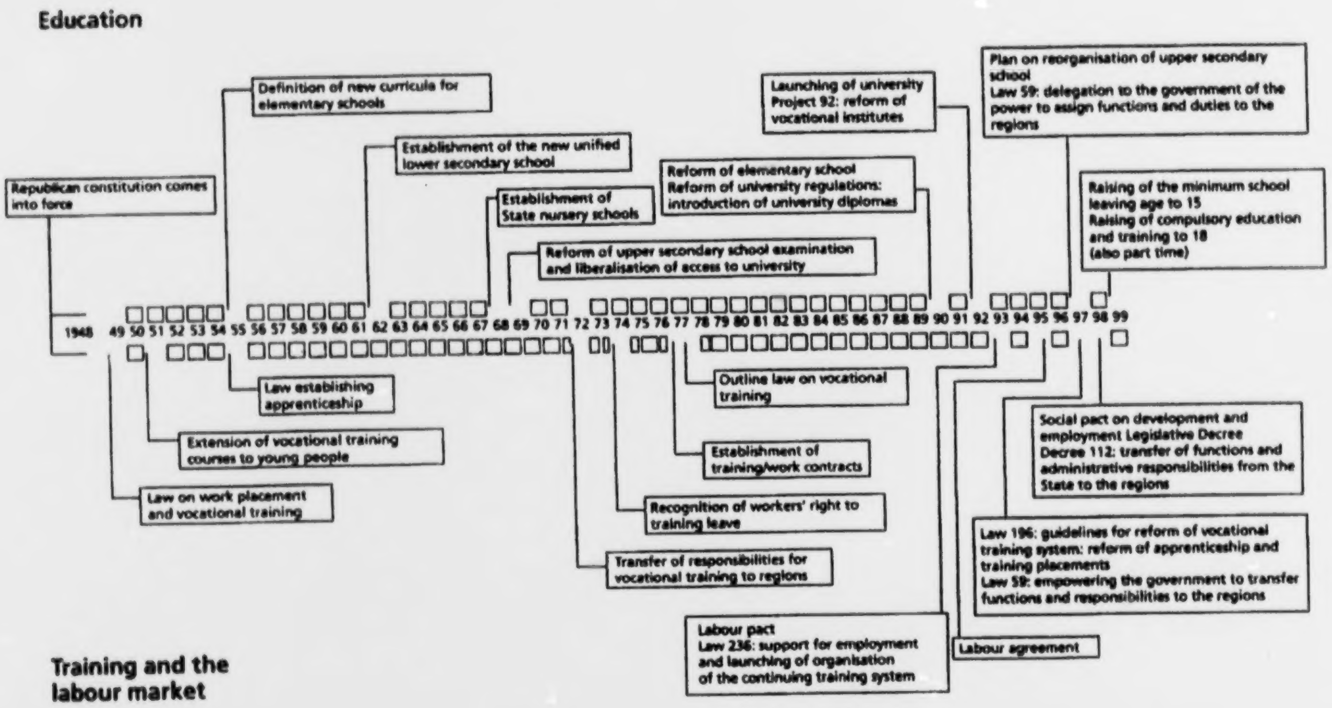
- the creation of an '*Intervocational fund for continuing vocational training*', with the gradual allocation of resources derived from employers' contributions to 'workers training measures under company or local training plans agreed between the social partners';
- the launching of a system of certification of the skills acquired.

Lastly, in December 1998, the 'Social pact on development and employment' signed by the government and the social partners reiterated the strategic value of training, which was to become a basic component of every measure to promote employment and was to pave the way for the obligation to provide training up to the age of 18. The latter demand was met in practice in May 1999, when Parliament approved the raising of the compulsory school and training age to 18. This obligation may be met by academic or training routes, or a combination of the two, in:

(a) the school system;
(b) the vocational training system for which the regions are responsible;
(c) the apprenticeship system.

The practical application of this reform was to be set out in the implementing regulation to be issued by November 1999.

Figure 9. **Development of the vocational training system**


Education
Republican constitution comes into force
Definition of new curricula for elementary schools
Establishment of the new unified lower secondary school
Establishment of State nursery schools
Reform of upper secondary school examination and liberalisation of access to university
Reform of elementary school
Reform of university regulations: introduction of university diplomas
Launching of university
Project 92: reform of vocational institutes
Plan on reorganisation of upper secondary school
Law 59: delegation to the government of the power to assign functions and duties to the regions
Raising of the minimum school leaving age to 15
Raising of compulsory education and training to 18
(also part time)
1948 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99
Law establishing apprenticeship
Extension of vocational training courses to young people
Law on work placement and vocational training
Outline law on vocational training
Establishment of training/work contracts
Recognition of workers' right to training leave
Transfer of responsibilities for vocational training to regions
Social pact on development and employment Legislative Decree
Decree 112: transfer of functions and administrative responsibilities from the State to the regions
Law 196: guidelines for reform of vocational training system: reform of apprenticeship and training placements
Law 59: empowering the government to transfer functions and responsibilities to the regions
Labour pact
Law 236: support for employment and launching of organisation of the continuing training system
Labour agreement
Training and the labour market

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2.2. The structure of responsibilities

2.2.1. Education

Historically, the Italian school system has been a unified and centralised system. There are two State structures with responsibility for managing the education system at national level:

- the **Ministry of Education**, which is responsible for general education, from pre-school provision to the end of the upper secondary school;
- the **Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research**, which, since 1989, has been responsible for managing the university system and State research bodies.

From the 1950s decentralisation has gradually been extended. From 1972 in particular, many of the State's administrative responsibilities have been transferred to the local level, the regions, the provinces and the communes.

More recently Legislative Decree 112/98, implementing Law 59/97, has extended the functions assigned to the various local government bodies:

- the **regions** are responsible for planning the integrated provision of training, for planning the school network within the human and financial resources laid down by the State and, on the basis of provincial plans, for defining the school calendar and contributions for non-State schools;
- the **provinces** are responsible in the field of upper secondary education, for school building programmes, the formulation of plans for the organisation of the network of school establishments and implementation of the plans approved by the region, the organisation of support services for disabled or disadvantaged pupils, and structuring the plan for the use of establishments and equipment;
- the **communes** are responsible for the same functions as those assigned to provinces, but at lower levels of education. In cooperation with the provinces, they conduct adult education, school and vocational guidance activities and take measures to prevent pupils dropping out of school.

Furthermore, since 1974 when the delegated decrees *(decreti delegati)* were introduced (Presidential Decree 416 of 31.5.1974), the management of schools has been opened up to others such as parents, students, and workers and employers' organisations.

In 1989, with the establishment of the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research, university bodies were granted independence.

Recently, Ministerial Decree 765 of 27 November 1997 launched experiments in teaching and organisational autonomy in school establishments, as set out in Article 21 of Law 59/97 on the reform of the public administration.

2.2.2. Initial and continuing vocational training

Unlike the school system, the vocational training system cannot be defined as a unified, organic system, since the various streams of the system are the responsibility of different bodies.

Figure 10 **Institutional responsibilities for training**

Responsible authorities	School training								University training								Regional training							
					■				▨				■				▨				■			
National level	2	2	2						▨ 3	3	3						▨	1						
Regional level				4													▨	4	4	4				
Local level																			5	5				
Organisations/ institutions		11	11	11	■	11 8 9				12	12	12	■	12	12			8 9 10	8 9 10	8 9 10	■	8 9 10	8 9 10	10

1. Ministry of Labour
2. Ministry of Education
3. Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technical Research
4. Regions and autonomous provinces
5. Local bodies
6. Employers' organisations
7. Workers' organisations
8. Vocational training centres
9. Private non-profit-making centres
10. Company schools and/or training centres
11. School establishments
12. Universities

Function

▨ Regulation of the system
☐ Definition of contents
☐ Assessment and certification
☐ Information and guidance

Delivery through

■ training centres or institutes
☐ alternance
☐ self-learning
☐ the workplace

As laid down by the constitution, the regions have responsibility for vocational training. Legislative Decree 112/98, which reorganised the complex subject of the functions and tasks assigned to the various institutional bodies, retained for the State:

- responsibility for international relations, in particular with the European Union;
- direction of guidance and coordination of vocational training;
- the definition of standards for vocational qualifications and training credits; and
- the definition of the minimum requirements for the accreditation of training bodies.

Having regard to these functions, the Conference of the State and Regions exercises the functions of providing the statutory opinions and proposals, and also defines measures to harmonise national and regional objectives.

The regions then are responsible for both initial and continuing vocational training, and Legislative Decree 112/98 confirms that these functions are usually delegated to the provinces (see Section 2.2.3 below).

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Outside the regional spheres, there are some other channels in the Italian training system:

- vocational training conducted within the school system and in particular certain types of upper secondary schools with vocational aims, which comes under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education;
- vocational training conducted within the university system, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research.

Based on Legislative Decree 112/98, the planning of the integrated provision of training, structured as education and vocational training, is the responsibility of the regions.

Alongside the institutional training channels, there is the private training system which covers training activities within the workplace conducted without public contributions and provides what are known as 'free courses', funded by enrolment fees and attendance fees paid by the users.

2.2.3. Delegation to the provinces

In order to react effectively to the needs of the production systems and the labour market at local level, for some time now work has been proceeding on the delegation of responsibility for vocational training to the provinces. This would shift to local (provincial) level the planning, implementation, administration and assessment of training activities, whereas the strategic functions of direction and monitoring would remain at regional level.

This is a process which has been launched in advance of the changes currently being introduced by the Italian public administration, the aim being to give greater powers to decentralised levels of government, which are further legitimised by these changes.

Although the outline law already refers to the role of the local authorities (Article 3 discusses the delegation to local bodies of administrative functions for the matters covered by Law 845), it was not until Law 142/1990 on the 'reform of local autonomies' that national legislation identified the province as the primary level to which responsibility for vocational training should be delegated, forcefully stating the need to define a new institutional architecture.

This requirement was repeated in Law 59 of 15 March 1997 (delegation to the government of the power to assign functions and duties to the regions and local bodies for the reform and streamlining of the public administration). The Law made explicit reference to the principle of subsidiarity in regulating the relations between the regions and local authorities. The implementing decree, Decree 469, was issued on 23 December 1997. This regulates the assignment to regions and local bodies of responsibilities for labour policies, and it enhances the role of the provinces.

Whereas in certain regions the delegation of responsibilities to the provinces has already been in operation for several years, in others it has not yet been carried out. In certain cases 'full' responsibilities have been delegated, i.e. both the transfer of functions and recognition of full operational autonomy, whereas in others the assignment is more simply a 'call to participate' or a cooperative relationship.

In this trend towards decentralisation there is convergence with the strategies of the European Union for the period 2000–06 ('Agenda 2000'), which are to promote a detailed structure of responsibilities for regulating the use of the European Social Fund at the various institutional levels concerned. The tendency is to shift responsibility towards the regions and provinces, the emphasis in the implementation of European development policies being on the local dimension.

The following summary table presents the overall picture of this process.

Table 15. **State of implementation of the process of delegation to the provinces**

Region and year of delegation	Functions included in the delegation	Functions actually delegated
Valle d'Aosta	There is no provision for delegation to provinces	
Piedmont (1995)	♦ Identification of training needs ♦ Formulation of proposals and opinions on three-year plans and annual directives ♦ Approval and forwarding of provincial plans for labour policy ♦ Recognition of 'free' courses ♦ Conduct of school and vocational guidance ♦ Promotion of participation by significant local players ♦ Reaching planning agreements and conventions with the Ministry of Education's local bodies and individual school establishments under regional agreements	♦ All
Lombardy (1980) (1995)	♦ Formulation of a proposed provincial three-year plan for vocational training based on the outline project in the regional plan ♦ Forwarding to the region of proposals for the annual provincial plan of activities ♦ Management of regional vocational training centres	♦ Forwarding to the region of proposals for the annual provincial plan of activities
Liguria (1993 and 1997)	♦ Formulation, approval and management of the annual vocational training plan based on the three-year regional plan	♦ Annual planning of activities ♦ Management of provincial vocational training centres ♦ Entering into conventions for the indirect implementation of training projects
Veneto	There is no provision for delegation to provinces	
Trentino-Alto Adige	Since this is a region with a special statute, the provinces have full responsibility for vocational training	
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	There is no provision for delegation to provinces	
Emilia-Romagna (1979)	♦ Coordination of training measures ♦ Formulation and approval of multiannual programmes and annual plans ♦ Supervision of the implementation of planning guidelines and multiannual plans, vocational guidance establishing appropriate links with school districts ♦ Entering into conventions for the authorisation and management of courses, issuing the certificate of qualification ♦ Supervision and monitoring of the work of the centres administered by foundations and associations	♦ All

(continued)

Region and year of delegation	Functions included in the delegation	Functions actually delegated
Umbria (1981 and 1991)	♦ Administrative functions related to: — the organisation, management and supervision of training schemes — vocational guidance — the promotion of education and permanent education	♦ Participation in preparing the three-year vocational training plan ♦ Organisation, management and supervision of training schemes ♦ Guidance ♦ Promotion of education and continuing education
Tuscany (1994)	♦ Participation in the planning of training measures ♦ Implementation of programmes and measures under those programmes, by the provinces directly or by assignment to other suitable bodies	♦ Implementation of the annual programme of activities ♦ Definition of a detailed plan of interventions under direct management
Marche (1990)	♦ Administrative functions in the field of vocational training, integrated with own and delegated functions ♦ Unified coordination of vocational training measures	♦ Formulation of the annual training plan ♦ Approval, management and monitoring of the implementation of training projects jointly financed by the EU
Lazio (1992 and 1997)	♦ Management of establishments in which training projects are being implemented and the other measures laid down by the annual plan, as well as of training centres offering courses for young people after the minimum school-leaving age, with the aim of providing a basic qualification ♦ Administrative functions for vocational training activities ♦ Establishment of a regional agency for vocational training and employment, a pole of reference and coordination for the planning and support of implementation, to include delegation of responsibilities for vocational training	♦ Management of the establishments in which other measures laid down by the annual plan are being conducted ♦ Management of vocational training centres where courses, designed to impart a basic qualification, are conducted for young people who have completed their compulsory school education
Abruzzi	There is no provision for delegation to provinces	

(continued)

Region and year of delegation	Functions included in the delegation	Functions actually delegated
Molise (1995)	♦ Administrative management of vocational training centres and the conduct of training schemes of relevance to the province ♦ Technical and administrative supervision of training activities conducted under conventions ♦ Appointment of assessment boards for the final tests for the issue of certificates of qualification and specialist skills ♦ Operating activities associated with the compilation of data for the assessment of training measures ♦ Establishment and revocation of conventions with parties managing vocational training and measures arising from them, related to the allocation of funds and reporting back	
Apulia (1978)	♦ Participation in the preparation of schemes for multiannual programming, structured as annual plans ♦ Management of vocational training activities	♦ Implementation of the programme of training activities authorised in accordance with the region's instructions and directives
Campania (1980 and 1981)	♦ Regional administrative vocational training functions ♦ Implementation of annual plans ♦ Didactic and administrative monitoring of training activities	
Basilicata (1990 and 1996)	♦ Administrative functions in connection with the management of vocational training centres for the mountain communities ♦ Transfer to the provinces of administrative functions for the management of the regional centres of Bella, Tricarico and Tursi	♦ Implementation of training and guidance initiatives ♦ Implementation of schemes to survey training demand ♦ Creation and organisation of guidance services ♦ Development of pilot projects for innovation in vocational training
Calabria (1985)	♦ Administrative functions for the implementation of vocational training plans ♦ Administrative and didactic coordination of all training activities ♦ Appointment of members of the social audit committee ♦ Appointment of assessment boards for the final tests and for the issue of certificates	♦ Formulation of the proposed three-year plan ♦ Conduct of management activities for the implementation of the administrative functions delegated
Sicily (Statute)	♦ Promotion of training activities ♦ Management of training activities, either directly or by assignment to third parties	♦ All
Sardinia (1979)	♦ Formulation by the area councils and the mountain communities councils of multiannual activities in line with regional guidelines ♦ Formulation of annual training plans	♦ Formulation of multiannual and annual proposals for training activities based on regional guidelines ♦ Forwarding to the region of annual training requirement plans

SOURCE: REGIONAL LEGISLATION ANALYSED BY ISFOL

2.3. The present state of the vocational training system

2.3.1. The planning of measures

In the preliminary phase, the planning process includes the conduct of searching analysis on the regional labour market situation, social and economic development and the status of the local vocational training system.

The vital strategic point is the analysis of needs, which in the 1980s was entrusted to the regional labour market centres but which in the 1990s has been allocated to a growing extent to the social partners through the spread of 'bilateral bodies', both at local and at national level.

Regional policy on vocational training is formulated and defined by the regional board (*giunta regionale*), which draws up a guideline document. After consulting the social partners, the three-year planning document is approved and then updated annually. This sets out the strategic guidelines and specific objectives of regional efforts in vocational training, as well as the distribution of resources.

Based on the multiannual programme approved by the Council, the board draws up a proposal for a more strictly operational annual plan, which in turn must be approved by the Council. On the basis of this annual plan, operators in the field are invited — generally through a public tender procedure — to formulate specific planning proposals. These proposals are evaluated in the light of available resources. Plans for implementation are defined, launching the allocation of funds to the training bodies and therefore to training courses.

It must be pointed out that there are differences, sometimes substantial, in the planning procedures actually implemented in individual regions. This is a typical feature of the Italian training system, which has marked disparities at local level.

It should also be pointed out that the development of planning processes (although it could also be said, of a genuine planning 'culture') is, to an extent, due to the influence of the Community funds. These, especially since 1988 — i.e. the reform of the EU structural funds — have imposed their own logic, constraints and rules of action on the system as a whole, as well as regulating the pathways towards the implementation and evaluation of activities.

In particular, the 'objective-oriented' planning model adopted by the European Social Fund provides the impetus to combine the planning of training and employment in a single process.

Apart from general planning rules, recourse to ESF co-funding has placed an obligation on regions to review their organisation and management procedures. Innovation in the procedures for assigning training activities to management bodies is one of the main elements in the process of change that has been occurring in the Italian vocational training system.

The spread of the practice of using public tenders for awarding contracts for the management of activities has also enhanced the planning capacity of regional authorities, introducing greater transparency into decision-making processes. It has obliged them to define more precisely their strategies for intervention and, in the light of those strategies, to measure the validity of the proposals received, thus focusing attention on the quality of the training provided and on the efficiency and effectiveness of training measures.

2.3.2. Management of activities

The outline law defines vocational training activities as services in the public interest. As such, unless vocational training is provided directly by public sector bodies, it can be provided by other kinds of bodies through an act of 'administrative concession', which takes the form of a 'convention'.

The regional vocational training system, therefore, is characterised by management pluralism, under which there can be a range and variety of solutions. These may be divided into two macro-types:

(a) public sector management, which can be implemented in various ways:
  - direct management by the region,
  - management delegated to local authorities: the provinces, communes or consortia of communes, or mountain communities,
  - mixed direct/delegated management,

(b) management under a convention. The regions may enter into conventions with bodies set up by the unions and employers' associations, associations with training and social objectives, employers or consortia of employers or the cooperative movement, provided that:
  - they fulfil the necessary requirements (suitable buildings, staff and expertise, etc.),
  - their aim is vocational training,
  - they are non-profit-making,
  - they guarantee the social monitoring of the activities through ad hoc committees set up by the regions,
  - their annual accounts are made public,
  - they apply the national agreement for the relevant professions to their own staff, and
  - they accept the regions' monitoring of the proper use of the funds assigned.

For the training, refresher training, re-skilling and retraining of workers, the region may enter into conventions with employers or consortia of employers which, although training may not be their objective, conduct training for their own employees.

The range of bodies that can manage training and the relationships between them and the administrative structures with responsibility for overall management of the provision of training is currently in the process of a radical change.

Current changes in regional planning procedures and the forms in which EU funding is allocated to co-financed projects have in fact helped to steer training bodies towards free market competition, forcing them to embark upon a process of rationalisation, and organisational and management efficiency, as well as better quality and more effective services.

On the one hand, this change helps to 'open up' the market, stimulating the emergence of new providers. On the other, it calls for the definition of new and reliable mechanisms for monitoring the quality of providers. i.e. the adequacy of their structures and the professional expertise deployed in the training they provide, quite apart from their mere planning capacity.

A response to the quest for quality among training providers has been the twofold format of accreditation or certification, currently the focus of a structural redefinition of the Italian training system. Lagging somewhat behind other countries in the European Union, the Labour Agreement and Law 196/97 ('the *Treu* package') set the terms of references for a new model for the accreditation of training bodies, as well as for identifying the standards of quality of both establishments and trainers.

Nevertheless, despite the progress that has been made, the number of establishments affected by the certification practices is still small. At present the main reference model, as in many other European countries, is the ISO 9000 standard, but in this field too a widely differentiated situation is emerging at regional level.

Besides the public sector, vocational training provided by the school and the regional vocational training systems, there is a private sector provision of training implemented with no support from public resources, funded from enrolment fees and attendance fees paid by the users.

The relationship between the training bodies that offer free vocational training and the regions can take various different forms:

- a total absence of relations between the public body and the training provider, which operates on the open market and establishes itself solely through the quality of the services it provides;
- the region grants official cognisance (*presa d'atto*) to the 'free-market' courses and the certificates they issue, which may be used for publicity purposes but has no practical consequences for the trainees;
- the region may grant recognition or authorisation (*riconoscimento o l'autorizzazione*) to 'free-market' courses that are equivalent in duration and structure to the courses provided by the regions and/or the training institutes providing similar courses. This entails legal recognition of the equivalence of certification of qualification issued by those courses and those issued by centres operating under conventions.

This is a fast-expanding area of training provision, representing a dynamic and quite considerable segment of the overall provision, even though it is a feature of the sector that there is a high turnover of operators and a relatively short lifecycle of training providers.

2.3.3. The role of the social partners

The outline law has already assigned an important role to the social partners, recognising them as vital interlocutors for the regions during the phases of planning and monitoring activities, as well as possible providers of training. This role has been expanding over a period of time.

During the 1980s and the early 1990s, the affirmation of the principle of 'dialogue' has led to the social partners being regarded not just as 'interlocutors', but also as 'co-decision-makers', directly and fully involved in the management and planning of active labour policies, and in particular in vocational training.

One of the first signs of this change in outlook was the introduction in 1984 of training/work contracts and the possibility of defining through consultation the training plans connected with such contracts. Law 56 of 1987 enabled the social partners to take part in the regional employment boards (*commissioni regionali per l'impiego*), which promote training measures for workers placed on 'job mobility registers' (2), whose salaries are being paid out of public funding or who are unemployed.

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(2) See Annex 3.

A token of the maturing of the process of participation by the social partners is the interconfederation agreements signed between 1985 and 1991. These were a forerunner to the creation of many joint management and union bodies and bilateral agencies whose objective is to establish stable relationships of trust between the parties on which to base discussion of themes that are of priority for both. To a growing extent these also include the subject of training and involve the acceptance of direct financial and planning commitments.

Nevertheless it was the tripartite agreement on the cost of labour signed in 1993 that confirmed the importance of the social dialogue on vocational training and acknowledged it as a fundamental instrument in the planning and definition of intervention strategies. The agreement followed the adoption of Law 236 of 1993, which recognised the key role of consultation with the social partners on the definition of needs, initial training and continuing vocational training interventions.

This agreement also led, in 1995, to the establishment, within the Ministry of Labour, of the National Committee for Consultation on Training Policies (*Comitato nazionale di concertazione delle politiche di formazione*), consisting of the regions, the social partners and representatives of all those bodies which, on various counts, have responsibility for vocational training. In practice, however, there has been no precise definition of the bodies, functions, procedures and actual powers entailed in implementing the principles laid down.

The subsequent labour agreement of 1996 further reinforces the role of the social partners, providing for the institutionalisation of their involvement at regional level by conferring on them concrete tasks associated with guidelines, monitoring and evaluation of the training system. It also implements the idea, formulated in the 1993 Agreement, of establishing a body for the joint union/employer management of the funds allocated to continuing vocational training. The contributions by employers (0.30 % of the wage bill), currently allocated to the 'rotation fund' (*Fondo di rotazione*), would be redirected towards this body and the regional vocational training system, thus reaffirming the crucial role of bilateral bodies in the analysis of training requirements.

The decree implementing Article 17 of Law 196/97 establishes a board whose members represent the institutions and the social partners, with the task of defining annual guidelines and objectives for the whole national vocational training system.

The role of negotiation between the social partners on the subject of continuing vocational training, at both national industry and company levels, is still mainly linked with the need for 'maintenance' or at most designed to gear vocational expertise to technological change. Nevertheless there is no lack of significant examples of innovation, such as the national collective agreement for the chemical industry in which, within the national monitoring centre set up by the partners, there is a training section whose aims are to study the effects of technological change on the organisation of labour and to promote adequate training programmes.

2.3.4. The role of the European Social Fund

From the time of its establishment, the European Social Fund has played a gradually increasing role in the Italian training system, supporting it and providing the impetus for the overall effort to bring it into line with Community standards.

In the past a critical juncture in the organisation of training activities arose with the difficulties encountered by the regional systems in the planning and administration of activities. Recourse to co-financing has helped to increase the volume of training provided, but has also imposed new rules on its planning, monitoring and evaluation — an unaccustomed feature for Italy in public sector management.

It should be borne in mind, however, that Member States participate as active bodies in the formulation of operating plans, so that decisions made by the EU are substantially consensus decisions, at least at central level. This means that joint financing is often used as an instrument for the support of innovations evolving within the system.

The reform of the funds in 1988 in particular, as well as the Community 'conditioning', have stimulated a renewal of the planning model adopted and the types of action.

The introduction of an 'objective-based' planning model has imposed reference to a unified planning framework in which the priorities at local and sectoral level and the concrete measures to be carried out, need to be clearly defined. Attention to the quality of the results has highlighted the role of monitoring and assessment within the process of training provision.

Moving away from the system traditionally focusing on courses, the introduction of Community regulations has shifted the emphasis to the individual, who may need many types of guidance and training actions, help in finding employment, tutoring in starting up a business and so on.

In the first four years of implementation of the European Social Fund, 60.4 % of the total allocations for the six-year period from 1994 to 1999 have been committed, so that the general level of the dependence of Italian vocational training systems on European funding stands at about 70 %. With regard to the types of action funded, the renewal of funds appears to have had a limited impact on the system, in view of the small proportion of non-training actions out of the total number of actions approved.

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Chapter 3
The structure of the vocational education and training system

3.1. The general education system and its role in training

The general education system is currently divided into three levels, preceded by pre-school education: primary education, secondary education and post-secondary education. Up to 1998 compulsory schooling extended from the ages of 6 to 14, a total of eight years. In January 1999 the minimum school-leaving age was increased to 15 years of age. Finally, in May 1999 approval was given to raising the compulsory education and training age to 18.

Pre-school education, which is free of charge and optional, extends from the age of 3 to the age of 5. It is provided by nursery schools, which were established in 1968 and are attended by over 95 % of children in the corresponding age group (figures for 1996/97).

Primary education, which corresponds to the first five years of elementary school, runs from 6 to 10 and is completed with the 'certificate of elementary education' (*licenza elementare*), which entitles the pupil to go on to lower secondary education. Its goal is the pupil's numeracy, literacy and general education.

Secondary education is divided into two cycles, lower and upper.

Lower secondary education corresponds to the three years of lower secondary school, extending from the age of 11 to 13, and is compulsory. Since 1962 this has been a comprehensive course of studies, i.e. attended by all pupils. Its aim is to promote the education and training of the pupil and to encourage guidance on subsequent occupational and schooling choices. It ends with a '*licenza media*', a diploma of lower secondary education, that offers access to any type of upper secondary school. Up to the 1998/99 school year, this diploma also marked the end of compulsory education. With effect from the 1999/2000 school year, compulsory schooling will, as already pointed out, continue up to the enrolment in the first year of upper secondary education for pupils who have not already reached the age of 15. It should be pointed out, however, that the rate of transfer to upper secondary education was already very high: over 94 % in the 1997/98 academic year.

Upper secondary education offers a large number of streams, with various goals and of varying duration (from 3 to 5 years of study, with the option of supplementary years leading to a diploma for shorter courses). These may be grouped in five main streams:

- **academic secondary education** (*istruzione liceale*), providing a general cultural education. Together with teacher training education, it is also known as humanistic or classical education, historically contrasted with technical and vocational education. Academic secondary education covers classical, science and language secondary schools, all of which provide five-year courses structured in two cycles: a lower one of two years and an upper one of three years of education;
- **teacher training** (*istruzione magistrale*), which includes the teacher training schools and institutes in which future teachers in nursery and elementary schools are trained;
- **technical education** (*istruzione tecnica*), divided into three main fields: agriculture, industry and commerce, each including several sections;

- **vocational education** *(istruzione professionale)*, offering different specialist skills in many sectors, in agriculture, industry, the craft trades, services and non-typical sectors;
- **art education** *(istruzione artistica)*, which includes art colleges and art schools.

Since 1969 any type of diploma of upper secondary education taken at the end of the fifth year of study has provided access to any university faculty (see Section 3.2.3).

Up to 1998, on turning 14, pupils could, if they wished, go on to the system of regional vocational training (see Section 3.2.4) and could, after obtaining their certificate of lower secondary education, take what are known as 'level 1' or basic training courses. From 1999/2000 the minimum age for access to the regional vocational training system under the law approved on 19 January 1999 is 15.

As approved by Parliament in May 1999, the vocational training system and apprenticeship are alternatives to the school system for the compulsory provision of education and training up to the age of 18.

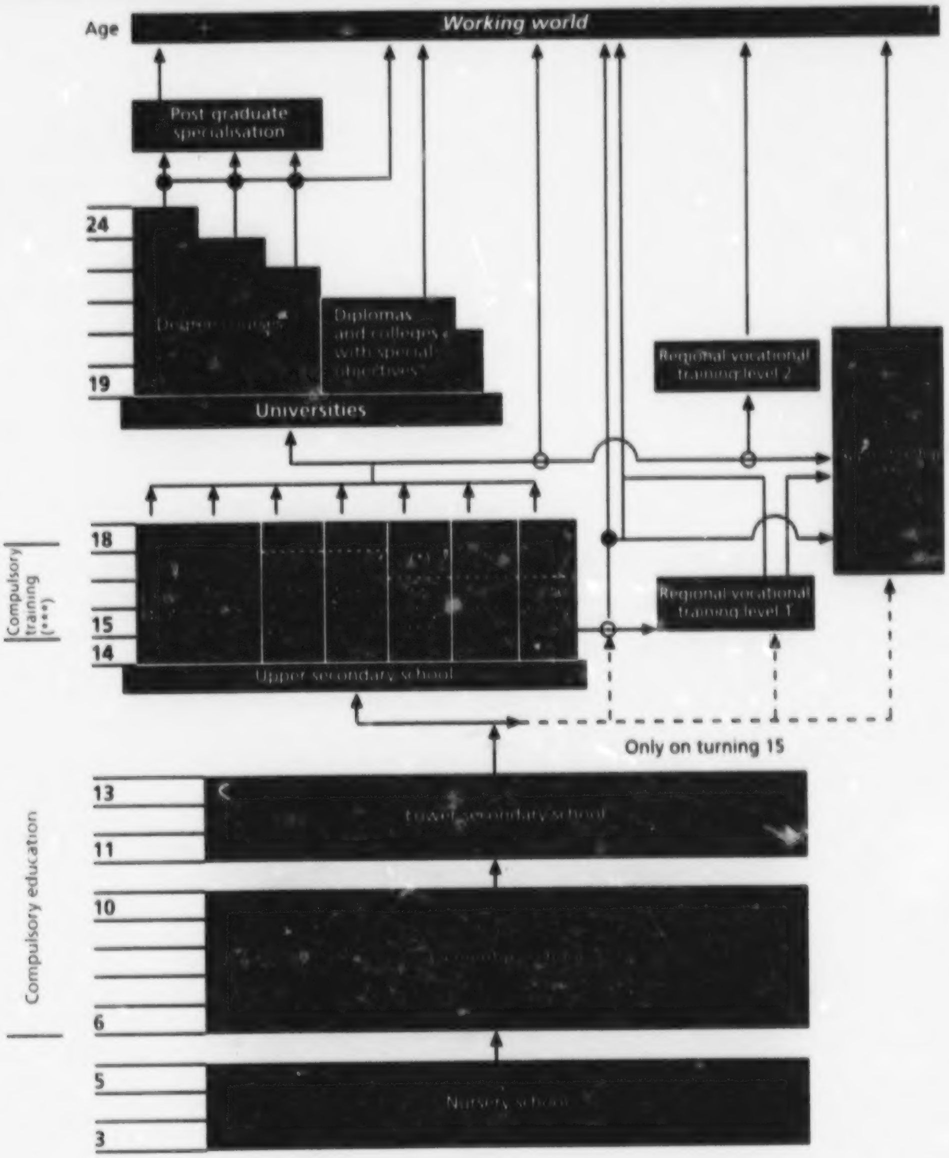
University education (*istruzione universitaria*) includes universities and colleges with special objectives, degree courses, post-graduate specialist courses and masters' degree courses. It leads to the acquisition of degrees, university diplomas, specialist diplomas and research doctorates.

University diplomas (*diplomi universitari*) were introduced into the Italian system in 1990 and the first courses were launched in 1992/93. University diploma courses last for not less than two, and not more than three, years. Since their establishment, there has been a great expansion in enrolments.

Graduate courses (*corsi di laurea*) last from a minimum of four to a maximum of six years. Enrolments have considerably increased during the 1980s as a result of the growing trend among young Italians to continue their studies and to put off the moment at which they have to enter the working world. There was a slight decline in the 1990s, although the trends differed depending on the discipline in question.

The **vocational training system** includes initial and continuing vocational training. Initial training in turn is divided into basic (or level 1) training aimed at those who have only the lower secondary education diploma, and level 2 training for those who have a qualification or a diploma from upper secondary education or a university.

Figure 11. **The Italian education and vocational training system**


Age
Working world
Post graduate specialisation
24
Degree courses
Diplomas and colleges with special objectives
19
Universities
Regional vocational training level 2
18
(*)
15
14
Upper secondary school
Regional vocational training level 1
Compulsory training (***)
Only on turning 15
13
Lower secondary school
11
10
Compulsory education
6
5
Nursery school
3

Key
(*) In recent years, vocational institute courses have been conducted in the form of post-qualification courses organised jointly with the regions.
(**) Accessible between 16 and 24 years of age (26 in south), but the contract cannot be for more than 4 years.

(***) Can be fulfilled in school, vocational training or apprenticeship.
----- End of ordinary cycle (with the option of continuing in order to obtain a diploma of five years' study).

To provide a detailed picture of the training routes taken by young people, a model has been constructed (Figure 12). It calculates the flows through the Italian school system by the 'according to class age' (*contemporanei*) method. For each group of pupils and students enrolling, it shows the dropout rates between one year and the next. In calculating the flows, allowance is made not only for outflows but also for re-entries. The data obtained in this way, despite the inevitable approximations, can be used for a trend analysis.

From the figures for 1996, the first striking point is that, out of 1 000 young people enrolling for the first year of lower secondary school, 44 leave school before taking the certificate of completion of compulsory education. Of these, 13 go to regional vocational training facilities and 28 to apprenticeship.

The vast majority of pupils taking the lower secondary education certificate continue their studies in upper secondary school. The rate of school attendance at secondary level has for many years been rising sharply. Despite this, there are many young people who drop out of education before they have completed the full school cycle. Most dropouts occur in the first two years, although it is also common to switch from one school to another.

Out of the 956 pupils obtaining the certificate of completion of their studies up to the minimum school-leaving age, 875 go on to enrol in the next level of education. Among those who leave the educational system with a school-leaving certificate, 25 go on to vocational training, 35 opt for apprenticeship and 21 go to non-training activities.

Of the 875 young people in the group initially enrolling in the first year of upper secondary school, 301 do not complete their normal studies. For many of them, however, this is not a permanent dropout. It can be estimated that 122 leave but then come back to secondary education, often at the time of the final examinations or the final year. Out of 179 permanent leavers, on the other hand, 55 go to regional vocational training, 80 to apprenticeship and 44 to other activities.

The young people initially enrolling for upper secondary school include 12 who leave with an intermediate qualification (in other words after the third year), whereas 684 reach the certificate of completion of upper secondary education. The breakdown according to streams is as follows: 104 in vocational education, 302 in technical education, 198 in academic education, 23 in art education and 57 in teacher training schools.

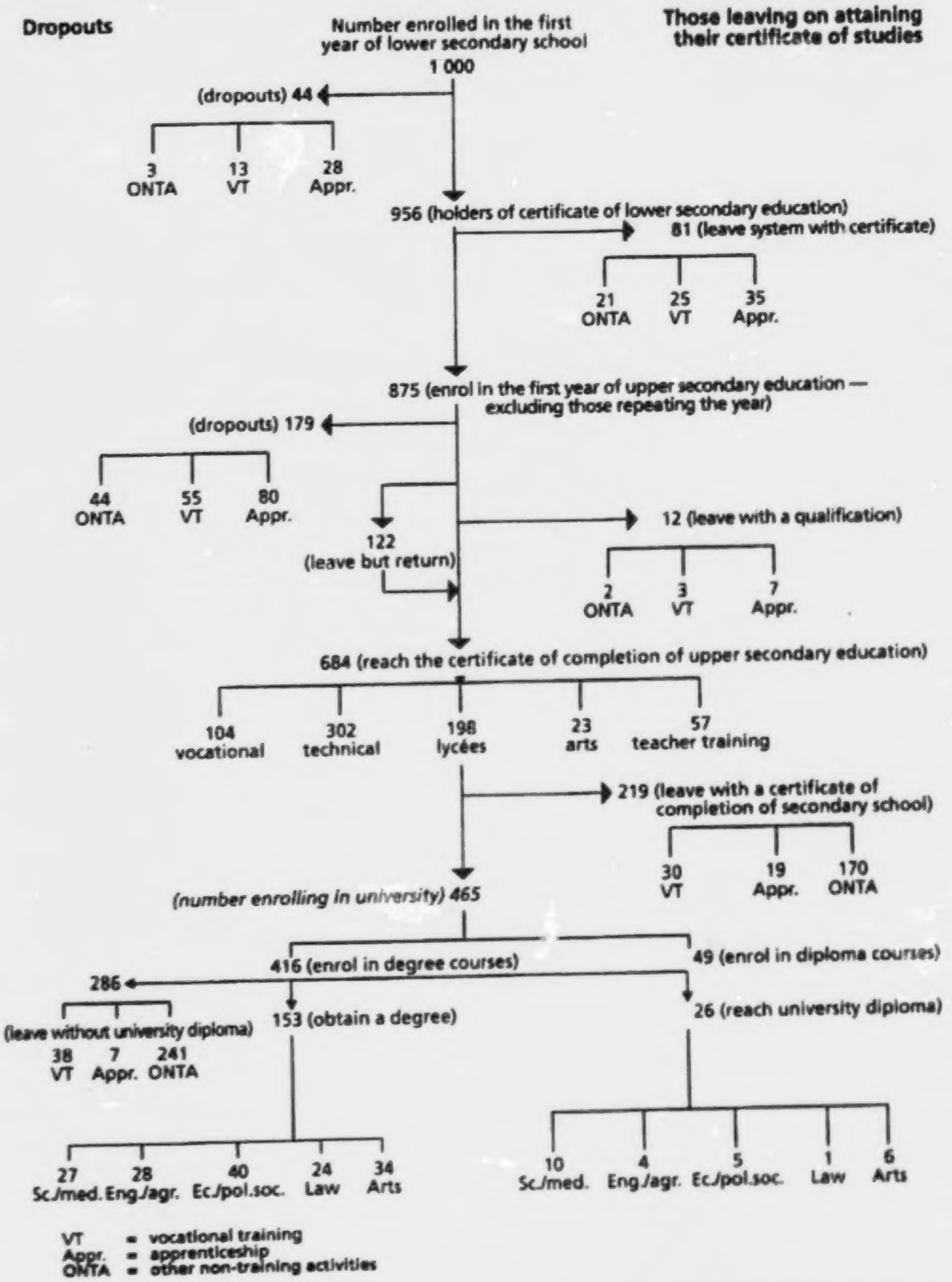
Out of the total of those completing upper secondary education, 30 go to a training course, 19 to apprenticeship and 170 to non-educational activities. No fewer than 465 enrol in university (416 in a full degree course, 49 in a university diploma course). Success rates, however, are fairly low. Only 153 young people in the initial group actually obtain a graduate degree, 26 a diploma. Of the 286 leaving university before obtaining a diploma, 38 enrol in training courses and 7 go to apprenticeship.

The figures presented here can be used to highlight certain critical points in the Italian education and training system and the role performed by vocational training.

The first point is that the existence of dropouts before completion of compulsory schooling, however low the rate, testifies to the persistence in certain areas of Italy of socio-cultural backwardness, poverty and social hardship.

In the second place, it becomes clear that the minimum school-leaving age, set at 14, was no longer reflected in the behaviour patterns of young Italians, nearly all of whom continued in education. This trend has been recognised by raising the minimum

Figure 12 **Flows in the Italian training system, 1996**


Dropouts
Number enrolled in the first year of lower secondary school
Those leaving on attaining their certificate of studies
1 000
(dropouts) 44
3 ONTA
13 VT
28 Appr.
956 (holders of certificate of lower secondary education)
81 (leave system with certificate)
21 ONTA
25 VT
35 Appr.
875 (enrol in the first year of upper secondary education — excluding those repeating the year)
(dropouts) 179
44 ONTA
55 VT
80 Appr.
122 (leave but return)
12 (leave with a qualification)
2 ONTA
3 VT
7 Appr.
684 (reach the certificate of completion of upper secondary education)
104 vocational
302 technical
198 lycées
23 arts
57 teacher training
219 (leave with a certificate of completion of secondary school)
30 VT
19 Appr.
170 ONTA
(number enrolling in university) 465
416 (enrol in degree courses)
49 (enrol in diploma courses)
286
(leave without university diploma)
38 VT
7 Appr.
241 ONTA
153 (obtain a degree)
26 (reach university diploma)
27 Sc./med.
28 Eng./agr.
40 Ec./pol.soc.
24 Law
34 Arts
10 Sc./med.
4 Eng./agr.
5 Ec./pol.soc.
1 Law
6 Arts
VT = vocational training
Appr. = apprenticeship
ONTA = other non-training activities

SOURCE: ISTAT, ISCO AND ISFOL, FIGURES PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

school-leaving age to 15 pending an overall reorganisation of educational cycles, to bring the total number of years of compulsory schooling up to 10. Nevertheless, the high number of young people leaving school or transferring from one stream to another in the first two years of upper secondary school is a sign of the difficulties associated with the redefinition of this two-year period as part of the overall reorganisation of the school cycles.

In the third place the model highlights the fact that the attraction exerted by the regional training system is still weak, and that it plays a role complementary to the school system. It is no coincidence that the greatest number of young people going to level 1 vocational training are students who have previously encountered setbacks in their school education. Careful thought should be given to this problem, since, with the raising of compulsory education/training to 18, the vocational training system will be called upon to perform a vital role and must not be perceived as in any way subordinate to school education. This state of affairs needs to be carefully assessed since, with the raising of the compulsory training age to 18, the vocational training system is required to play a fundamental role and so can no longer be seen as somehow subordinate to the school system.

One last point is the low productivity of university education, characterised by the high rates of enrolment and the large percentage of students dropping out of the courses. Even today although their numbers are growing there are relatively few young people who actually complete their university education.

As further evidence of this, thought should be given to the figures set out in Table 16, which provide a detailed picture of the evolution of the process of school attendance now taking place in Italy and testifies to the overall improvement in the 'productivity' of the school system, with the gradual reduction in dropouts. It is now a fairly well established practice to continue education after obtaining the certificate of lower secondary education, as shown by the rate of transfer to upper secondary education. From 82.2 % at the beginning of the 1980s, this rose to 94.3 % in the 1997/98 school year. When one considers that at the beginning of the 1990s this rate was still more or less the same as at the beginning of the previous decade (85.9 %), it is obvious that the tendency to prolong school education has been reinforced in very recent years.

Another very important phenomenon is the increase in the proportion of young people attending upper secondary education. At the beginning of the 1980s, 14 to18-year-olds in upper secondary education amounted to only just over half of their age group, whereas, in the latest year for which figures are available, the percentage has risen to 86.8 %. Similarly, there is an increase in the percentage of young people taking their diploma on completion of upper secondary education. The trend in the proportion then going on to university, on the other hand, is less linear, affected as it is both by the cost of university studies and the difficult prospects of obtaining employment even for university graduates. As a result, although the rate of enrolment out of 100 young people of the same age is rising, this fact is due to the growing numbers completing their certificate of upper secondary education by comparison with others in the same age bracket.

Table 16. **Education attendance indicators, 1980/81 to 1997/98**

Indicators	**1980/81**	**1990/91**	**1994/95**	**1995/96**	**1996/97**	**1997/98 (8)**
Lower secondary school certificate holders (per 100 in the same age group) (1)	88.1	99.8	94.7	101.1	100.7	(7)
Rate of transfer to upper secondary schooling (2)	82.2	85.9	91.7	96.1	92.5	94.3
Rate of attendance at upper secondary school (3)	51.7	68.3	77.6	80.0	81.5	86.8
Proportion passing certificate of completion of upper secondary education (4)	38.2	51.4	63.1	66.2	69.2	(7)
Rate of transfer to university (2)	70.7	71.3	64.0	68.4	67.9	65.9
Enrolments in university per 100 in the same age group (5)	25.9	35.6	40.8	43.2	44.8	45.6
Rate of enrolment in university (6)	25.1	30.6	38.1	39.9	41.1	45.4
Rate of productivity of the university	30.3	36.8	33.8	32.9	36.7	(7)

(1) Average for young people aged 13, 14 and 15. The figure may exceed 100 % because of those repeating the school year.

(2) The school/academic year indicated at the head of each column is the year of arrival.

(3) Those attending upper secondary school as a percentage of the total of young people aged 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18.

(4) Holders of certificate of completion of upper secondary education (*maturità*) compared with the total group of young people aged 18, 19 and 20.

(5) Total number enrolling for first year out of the average for young people aged 19, 20 and 21.

(6) Total number of those enrolling for university out of young people aged 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23.

(7) Data not available.

(8) Figures taken from the general report on the economic situation of the country (1997).

SOURCE: ***ISTAT, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND MINISTRY OF UNIVERSITIES AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH, FIGURES PROCESSED BY ISFOL.***

From an international comparison of the education attendance indicators for the 15–24 age group, it appears that in 1995 (the latest year for which figures are available) Italy's performance has now come into line with that of the other countries, although it retains its own specific characteristics.

Table 17 compares attendance in the education system by year of age in the 15–24 age group. Throughout compulsory schooling in European Union countries, school attendance exceeds 90 %. In certain countries (Denmark, Finland, France and Sweden), schooling remains at virtually the same level even after that period. In Italy school attendance is easily in excess of 90 % up to the age of 14, the minimum school-leaving age (although this age is the lowest in the OECD countries). Compared with the average for OECD countries, the Italian model of schooling seems to feature a lower rate of participation than the average during the first few years of secondary school and then a lesser reduction in the rate of participation than in other countries, resulting in a higher rate of participation in higher education.

Table 17. **Participation in the educational system (percentage of age group) by 15 to 24-year-olds, EU countries (1), 1995**

Country	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**
Austria	*97*	*94*	88	62	36	26	22	18	16	-
Belgium (2)	*103*	*103*	*100*	87	75	67	49	38	28	20
Denmark	*98*	94	82	72	55	42	40	36	33	28
Finland	*99*	93	90	81	41	43	49	44	39	32
France	*98*	96	93	84	70	56	42	31	21	13
Germany	*99*	*97*	94	84	65	45	34	41	20	18
Greece	86	79	56	48	45	36	29	17	13	8
Ireland	96	91	81	73	47	37	20	15	13	11
Italy (3)	**89**	**86**	**78**	**72**	**55**	**41**	**38**	**31**	**26**	**23**
Luxembourg	80	81	78	70	–	–	–	–	–	–
Netherlands	*99*	*98*	*93*	83	70	60	48	38	30	23
Portugal	88	73	73	55	45	44	47	25	22	17
Spain	*94*	83	75	63	53	50	40	34	25	17
Sweden	*96*	97	96	88	35	31	31	30	28	24
UK	*98*	87	75	54	45	39	33	22	17	14

(1) The figures in italics refer to the compulsory schooling age.

(2) The figures may be higher than 100 % due to repeat years.

(3) The table is taken from the OECD publication, *Education at a glance*, 1997, which does not in fact include figures for Italy. ISFOL has calculated these in the light of the annual survey conducted by Doxa on a sample of about 15 000 households, and ISTAT education statistics. The findings also include vocational training.

SOURCE: **OECD, REPORT ON EDUCATION 1997 AND, FOR ESTIMATES RELATING TO ITALY, DOXA AND ISTAT, FIGURES PROCESSED BY ISFOL.**

In the 14–19 age group the school participation rate declines with age: among 14-year-olds it is as high as 95.8 %, while among 15- and 16-year-olds it falls to 90.7 and 86.4 % respectively. At the age of 17 the rate is 81.6 %, at 18 it is 74.4 % and at 19 it is 54.2 %.

It is also of interest that the social origin and cultural level of the families of origin influence the rate of educational participation and the choice of the type of education and training path. The higher the occupational status of young people's parents and their level of education, the higher the participation rate. The school participation rate in the 14–19 age group is found to be 99.2 % where the head of the family is a graduate and 93.0 % where the head of the family has a certificate of upper secondary education. It falls to 80.1 % where the head of the family has a certificate of lower secondary education, 65.6 % where the head of the family has a certificate of elementary education and 36.6 % where the head of the family has no educational qualifications.

Table 18. **Educational and occupational status of young people, aged 14–19, by level of education of the head of family (in %)**

Status	**Total**	**Level of education of the head of family**				
		Graduate	**Certificate of higher secondary education**	**Certificate of lower secondary education**	**Certificate of elementary education**	**No certificate**
Student	80.4	99.2	93.0	80.1	65.6	36.6
Employed	8.3	0.0	3.7	9.1	13.7	18.1
Unemployed	3.0	0.0	0.7	2.8	5.7	13.6
First jobseeker	7.0	0.4	2.6	6.9	12.7	24.4
Housewife/man	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.1	2.3	7.3
Other	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
(Absolute figures in thousands)	3 366	284	892	1 256	853	82

SOURCE: ***ISFOL PROCESSING OF DOXA SURVEY FINDINGS, 1998.***

The family's educational level, therefore, has a very great influence on participation in secondary school, a finding that calls for appropriate measures to ensure equity in access to education and training. There is also a fairly clear-cut link between the occupational status of the reference person of the family (generally the father) and the rate of university enrolment.

Sex also appears to exert a fairly marked influence on the rate of school participation. Females tend to outperform males in education, irrespective of their social origin.

Lastly, there is a marked difference based on geographical area of origin: where the prospects of obtaining a job are good, this often works against staying on in education. Inversely, high levels of unemployment may be an incentive to continue in education. In this case, school is often seen not only as an instrument of social and job mobility but also as an opportunity to defer the time of entry into a labour market in serious difficulties.

3.2. Initial vocational training

3.2.1 A general picture

As stated in Section 2.2.1, responsibility for primary and secondary education is held by the Ministry of Education, responsibility for higher education by the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research, whereas responsibility for vocational training is delegated to the regional authorities.

Nevertheless the line of demarcation between the various providers of education and training is somewhat blurred. For instance, certain streams of upper secondary education (vocational, technical, the arts and teacher training) are to some extent 'vocational', just as university diplomas tend to be geared to the working world.

For this reason, in looking at the provision of initial vocational training in greater detail, it will be necessary to take into account not only the regional provision but also the vocational education coming under the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research (MURST).

For the purpose of highlighting the percentage of the various segments of training provision, the reader is referred to Table 19 which shows the breakdown of participation in the 14–19 age group. This age group has been taken as a reference because it is the one for which the training available is most varied.

Table 19. **Distribution of participants, aged 14–19, in vocational training by type of training, 1995/96 and 1996/97**

	1995/96		**1996/97**	
	absolute values	**%**	**absolute values**	**%**
Technical institutes	1 120 634	45.5	1 079 431	45.6
Vocational institutes	511 291	20.8	507 448	21.4
Art institutes	60 570	2.5	60 169	2.5
Teacher training (¹)	205 944	8.4	210 256	8.9
Level 1 regional vocational training	128 131	6.0	117 316	5.0
Apprenticeship	413 892	16.8	393 138	16.6
Total	**2 440 462**	**100.0**	**2 367 758**	**100.0**

(¹) Teacher training institutes and schools.

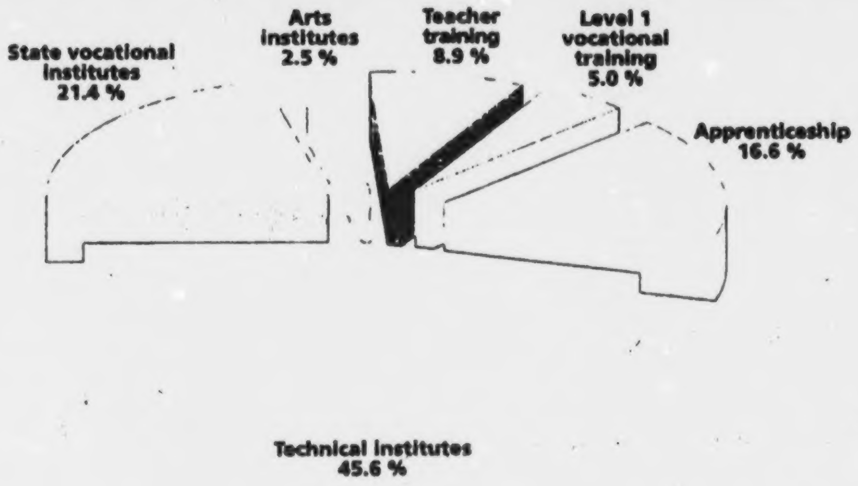
SOURCE: ***ISTAT AND MINISTRY OF LABOUR, FIGURES PROCESSED BY ISFOL.***

Figure 13 shows the relative proportion in 1996/97 of each of the streams into which initial vocational training aimed at the 14–19 age group is divided.

Taking all the channels of education and initial training of a vocational type existing in Italy, both in the school and in the regional training system, as well as apprenticeship, it is apparent that the highest numbers of users are attending State technical institutes (1 079 431, equivalent to 45.6 % of the total), followed by State vocational institutes (507 448, i.e. 21.4 %) and apprenticeship (393 138, or 16.6 %). In the latter, at present, the training element is limited, but, due to the large numbers being trained under this arrangement and to the reform of the regulations now taking place, apprenticeship may well become one of the main channels of vocational training in the system.

Level 1 regional vocational training accounts for a smaller proportion, but it should be borne in mind that the average duration of regional courses is two years, compared with the three to five years of school education, and that if a comparison was made taking this into account, the gap, while still wide, would certainly be narrower.

Figure 13 **Participation in initial vocational training, users in the 14–19 age group, by type of training route, 1996/97**



SOURCE: ISFOL

There are also several experimental forms of linking and integrating the two subsystems, just as there are quite a few efforts to bring about institutional integration. In particular, in the reforms that are likely as a result of the labour agreement and the proposed reorganisation of school cycles, integration is seen as a key point in a reformed system of education and training.

One last comment should be made on university diploma courses. Instituted in 1990 by Law 341 on the 'Reform of university teaching regulations', these were introduced for the purpose of providing university qualifications with a mainly practical and vocational content, that could quickly be put to good use on the labour market.

The introduction of university diplomas has brought Italy into line with other European countries, where for a long time there has been a 'lower level' short cycle channel of university education closely geared to the demands of local production systems. This adjustment has become necessary because of the need to reinforce and differentiate the provision of post-secondary education and training in Italy in response to the growing demand for practitioners at middle to high labour market level. It has also become crucial, following the definition of the system of recognition of academic qualifications in the European Union. This requires those wishing to engage in a profession to have successfully attended at least three years of a post-secondary course, although this does not necessarily need to be a university-type course.

3.2.2. Vocational streams in school education

Vocational education and technical education are the main vocationally-oriented streams in the school system. Together they account for about 60 % of young people in upper secondary education, and about 85 % of those in the vocational streams.

The greatest attraction is exerted by the technical institutes, which cater for the highest number of students: 1 081 699 in school year 1997/98, equivalent to 57.8 % of the total number of pupils in vocational training in the schools. Following the growth of the 1980s, enrolments in this type of school fell considerably in the early 1990s (– 16.9 % in the first six years of the current decade). A marked decrease in the number of pupils was recorded in particular by the technical, agricultural and commercial institutes, followed to a lesser degree by the industrial institutes. The opposite trend has occurred in institutes serving other sectors, such as maritime occupations, the hotel and catering trades, social services, and 'women's occupations', where the number of students has risen.

Table 20. **Students registered for upper secondary schools by type of institute, 1980/81 to 1997/98**

Type of institute	**School year**						
	1980–81	**1990–91**	**1996–97**	**1997–98 (*)**	**1990–91/ 1980–81**	**1996–97/ 1990–91**	**1997–98/ 1996–97**
	Absolute numbers				**% variation**		
Vocational institute	448 119	541 705	507 448	507 935	20.9	– 6.3	0.1
Technical institute	1 081 014	1 298 540	1 079 431	1 081 699	20.1	– 16.9	0.2
Lycées (general education)	559 167	733 388	757 775	762 176	31.2	3.3	0.6
Teacher training institutes	206 677	161 648	192 147	216 401 (1)	– 21.8	18.9	2.9 (1)
Teacher training schools	30 794	23 154	18 109		– 24.8	– 21.8	
Arts lycées	21 304	36 344	33 456	94 730 (2)	70.6	– 7.9	1.2 (2)
Arts institutes	35 742	61 549	60 169		72.2	– 2.2	
Total	**2 382 817**	**2 856 328**	**2 648 535**	**2 662 941**	**19.9**	**– 7.3**	**0.5**
Breakdown in %							
Vocational institute	18.8	19.0	19.2	19.1			
Technical institute	45.4	45.5	40.8	40.6			
Lycées (general educ.)	23.5	25.7	28.6	28.6			
Teacher training institutes	8.7	5.7	7.3	8.1 (1)			
Teacher training schools	1.3	0.8	0.7				
Arts schools	0.9	1.3	1.3	3.6 (2)			
Arts institutes	1.5	2.2	2.3				
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**			

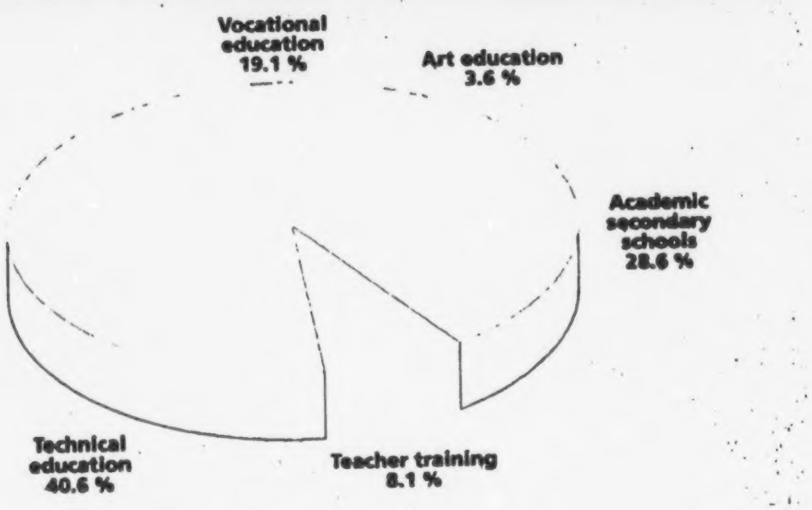
(*) Provisional data from *Relazione generale sulla situazione economica del paese* (1997).
(1) Includes teacher training schools.
(2) Includes arts institutes.

SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The decrease, which in practice has occurred in almost every sector of upper secondary education (with the exception of teacher training institutes), has been primarily due to the shrinking of the younger generations following a fall in the birth rate. This reduction is no longer being offset by the steady rise in the rate of school participation. The fall is partly the consequence of the gradual shift of the student population towards academic education, which is becoming more popular among young Italians. This phenomenon may be attributed to the growing difficulties being encountered by young people with diplomas coming out of the more vocational school streams and to the general tendency to continue studies up to university and, therefore, to opt for general studies which will not affect future choices of professional options.

A less marked fall (– 6.3 % in the period under consideration) was recorded by State vocational institutes, which cater for 27.2 % (507 935) of students in vocationally-oriented training in the school system. The better performance of this channel shows that a significant proportion of young people is still opting for the most immediately vocational stream.

Figure 14. **Pupils in upper secondary schools by stream school year 1997/98**



SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

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(a) Vocational education

One of the main channels for vocationally-oriented training in the school is that of vocational education provided by State vocational institutes. These are three-year courses on vocational subjects serving various sectors, designed to help young people gain rapid access to the labour market. On completion of the courses, nationally recognised qualifications are issued (level 1 qualifications). In actual fact only a few young people leave at this point. Since the short cycles were extended to five years, an experiment introduced in 1969, with the establishment of vocational post-qualification courses enabling young people to obtain an upper secondary vocational diploma, and, even more so, with the recent reform of curricula, it has become very common to continue studies up to the fifth year.

Training routes were reviewed and in 1992 drastically reduced in number, following an experimental period (Project 92). At present four basic types of vocational institutes exist:

- for agriculture,
- for industry and the craft trades,
- for the service sector,
- for non-typical sectors.

In turn each type is broken down into various qualifications. There are 17 in the traditional sectors, plus 38 other qualifications in the non-typical sector, which includes streams associated with special demands in local production contexts (confectionery, timber, marble, ceramics, film-making and television, the maritime and health-care sectors).

Table 21. **Students enrolled in vocational institutes, by stream, 1980/81 to 1997/98**

	School year						
Stream	**1980/81**	**1990/91**	**1996/97**	**1997/98 (*)**	**1990/91–1980/81**	**1996/97–1990/91**	**1997/98–1996/97**
		Absolute figures				**% variation**	
Agricultural	31 282	30 154	29 349	n.a	– 3.6	– 2.7	
Industrial	188 344	210 408	199 429	n.a	11.7	– 5.2	
Commercial	154 521	207 318	173 793	n.a	34.2	– 16.2	
Other (')	73 972	93 825	104 877	n.a	26.8	11.8	
Total	**448 119**	**541 705**	**507 448**	**507 935**	**20.9**	**– 6.3**	**0.1**
% composition							
Agricultural	7.0	5.6	5.8				
Industrial	42.0	38.8	39.3				
Commercial	34.5	38.3	34.2				
Other (')	16.5	17.3	20.7				
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**				

(*) Provisional figures from *Relazione generale sulla situazione economica del paese* (1997).
n.a.= not available.
(') Maritime occupations, hotel and catering trades, social services, 'women's vocational institutes'.

SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The vocational institutes, together with technical institutes, have traditionally enjoyed a measure of autonomy under their legal status because of their institutional links with the local economy and production enterprises. The school councils are empowered to produce annual activity plans and have a certain room for manoeuvre, including the right to use external experts.

In 1988, on the initiative of the Directorate-General for Vocational Education, Project 92 was launched in the form of a supported national experiment with the aim of reforming the curricula and vocational profiles of the State vocational institutes. The project arose from recognition of the inadequacy of the basic general education provided in vocational education. The job profiles at which the education was directed had become obsolescent and had proliferated over the years. The training curricula, which had concentrated on the technical aspects, instruction and practical work, had become too specific.

The objective, therefore, was to promote an improvement in the standards of basic general education, reorganise and innovate the job profiles and formulate curricula that develop multi-skilling and a range of technical abilities. The idea was that young people coming on to the labour market should be able to adjust to current changes in the production world.

The experimental project, subsequently main-streamed under a new regulation contained in ministerial decrees issued in 1992 (covering the initial three years of qualification) and in 1994 (for the final post-qualification two years of study), left the modular structure of the State vocational institutes unchanged. This provided for a preliminary option of leaving at the end of the three-year period with a vocational qualification and, thereafter, the option to go on to a two-year post-qualification course which would lead to the acquisition of a vocational certificate of completion of secondary education (*maturità professionale*).

The curriculum has been set up differently, and is now more general education-based rather than being solely practical and applicatory in nature. It should also be pointed out that, together with an extension of general and scientific education during the first two years and consequently a reduction in the number of hours spent in specialist training, an area of deepening (*approfondimento*), to which four hours a week are devoted, has been introduced. The individual institutes are free to plan this, in an effort to 'customise' study paths.

The experimental project has also promoted the institution of integrated (*integrati*) two-year post-qualification courses. These entail cooperation between vocational institutes and regional vocational training in the light of specific institutional objectives, based on conventions and bilateral agreements signed by the regions and the State (Directorate-General for Vocational Education).

(b) Technical education

The technical education (*istruzione tecnica*) provided by State technical institutes is designed to produce technical and administrative practitioners who will have middle ranking functions in the fields of agriculture, industry, commerce and tourism. These are five-year courses, leading to a technical diploma that provides access to any university faculty. The diploma accredits its holder for the corresponding occupation.

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There are many types of training routes, and these in turn break down into many specialist streams. The main types of technical institute are for:

- commerce,
- industry,
- surveying,
- agriculture.

Between the 1980s and 1990s, the experiment was also extended to the technical institutes (assisted projects), due to the efforts of the Directorate-General for Technical Education. Experiments with new curricula providing more time for general basic education and up-to-date specialist contents have affected a large number of schools.

In 1994, in certain streams, the experiments have in fact been converted into regulations. This has occurred in particular in the following streams: electronics, electrotechnology and communications (*Ambra* project); mechanical engineering (*Ergon* project); chemistry (*Deuterio* project), textiles (*Aracne* project) and economics and law (*Igea* project).

Table 22. **Students enrolled in technical institutes, by stream, 1980/81 to 1997/98**

Stream	**School year** **1980/81**	**1990/91**	**1996/97**	**1997/98 (*)**	**1990/91-1980/81**	**1996/97-1990/91**	**1997/98-1996/97**
	Absolute figures				**% variation**		
Industrial	281 202	327 497	281 956	n.a.	16.5	– 13.9	
Commercial	533 344	667 949	520 161	n.a.	25.2	– 22.1	
For surveyors	137 279	169 327	164 694	n.a.	23.3	– 2.7	
Others (')	129 189	133 767	112 620	n.a.	3.5	– 15.8	
Total	**1 081 014**	**1 298 540**	**1 079 431**	**1 081 699**	**20.1**	**– 16.9**	**0.2**
% composition							
Industrial	26.0	25.2	26.1				
Commercial	49.3	51.4	48.2				
For surveyors	12.7	13.0	15.3				
Others (')	12.0	10.3	10.4				
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**				

(*) Provisional figures from the *Relazione generale sulla situazione economica del paese* (1997).
n.a. = not available.
(') Agriculture, maritime occupations, air transport, tourism, company management and 'women's vocational institutes'.

SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

(c) Teacher training

Teacher training schools (*scuole magistrali*) were used traditionally to train nursery school teachers. At present they are organised as two separate cycles: a short cycle lasting for three years and a long, five-year cycle. On completion of the three-year course of study, a certificate of accreditation for teaching is issued. People opting for the three-year period may, following a supplementary examination, switch to the long cycle. At the end of the five-year course of studies, two certificates are obtained: the teacher training certificate and the diploma of experimental vocational studies. The curriculum is directed towards teaching methods and from the first year onwards, it includes work placements in nursery schools.

The **teacher training institutes** (*istituti magistrali*) were originally intended as providers of training for elementary (primary) school teachers. The duration of the course is four years, on completion of which an examination is taken and successful candidates can then have direct access to university faculties of teacher training. Attending a complementary fifth year provides access to other university faculties. Teacher training institutes have generally been considered a vocational training channel, but, with the recent introduction of an ad hoc degree course for the training of teachers, the institutes may now be included in the category of general educational establishments.

Table 23. **Students enrolled in teacher training institutes and schools, 1980/81 to 1997/98**

Stream	School year 1980/81	 1990/91	 1996/97	 1997/98 (1)	1990/91–1980/81	1996/97–1990/91	1997/98–1996/97
	Absolute figures				**% variation**		
Teacher training institutes	206 677	161 648	192 147	216 401 (2)	– 21.8	18.9	2.9 (2)
Teacher training schools	30 794	23 154	18 109		– 24.8	– 21.8	
Total	**237 471**	**184 802**	**210 256**	**216 401**	**– 22.2**	**13.8**	**2.9**

(1) Provisional figures from *Relazione generale sulla situazione economica del paese* (1997).
(2) Aggregate data.

SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

Since the introduction in 1998/99 of degree courses for nursery and elementary school teachers, these institutes have virtually been replaced under an experiment, which will lead to a new type of institute of secondary education. This new course of secondary studies will provide access to any university faculty but will no longer issue certificates accrediting their holders as teachers.

The experiment, conducted on an autonomous basis by individual institutes, has been implemented in two fields:

- **social, psychological and teaching methods**, for the definition of a course of studies specifically directed towards the training of teachers for elementary and nursery schools (leading up to the university course), where extensive time is devoted to subjects such as psychology, pedagogy and social sciences;
- **language,** for the definition of a lycée-type of course of studies, directed towards the study of foreign languages and other forms of language (verbal and non-verbal, multimedia) communication.

(d) Art education

Art institutes (*istituti d'arte*) were first created as three-year art schools offering a large number of streams. A final examination can be taken that leads to the diploma of Master of Applied Arts. Certain art institutes have set up, on an experimental basis, an additional two-year course leading to a diploma of upper secondary education (certificate of applied arts), which opens up access to all university faculties.

Table 24. **Students enrolled in art institutes, 1980/81 to 1997/98**

Stream	School year					
	1980/81	1990/91	1996/97	1997/98 (*)	1990/91–1980/81	1996/97–1990/91
	Absolute figures				% variation	
Art institutes	35 742	61 549	60 169	94 730 (')	72.2	– 2.2

(*) Provisional figures from *Relazione generale sulla situazione economica del paese* (1997).
(') The figure reflects the enrolment of about 30 000 young people in arts lycées.

SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

3.2.3. University level vocational training

Diploma courses, launched for the first time in the 1992/93 academic year, may be two or three years in duration. At present the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research has recognised 76 types of diploma, which can be grouped under 9 headings: scientific, medical, engineering, agricultural, economic, political and social, law, literature and sport (the Advanced Institute of Physical Education).

Table 25 Students enrolled in university diploma and special-purpose higher education institutes, breakdown by discipline, 1992/93 to 1997/98

Discipline	Academic year				
	1992/93	1996/97	1997/98	1996/97–1992/93	1997/98–1996/97
	Absolute figures			% variation	
Natural science	1 475	3 768	4 848	155.5	28.7
Medicine	6 558	15 967	19 346	143.5	21.2
Engineering	6 088	16 094	18 448	164.4	14.6
Agriculture	695	1 870	2 448	169.1	30.9
Economics	6 082	12 933	15 859	112.6	22.6
Social and political science	6 632	6 904	6 580	4.1	– 4.7
Law	145	834	1 486	475.2	78.2
Literature	969	2 146	3 378	121.5	57.4
Sport	17 051	16 121	17 205	– 5.5	6.7
Total	**45 695**	**76 637**	**89 598**	**67.7**	**16.9**
Percentage composition					
Natural science	3.2	4.9	5.4		
Medicine	14.4	20.8	21.6		
Engineering	13.3	21.0	20.6		
Agriculture	1.5	2.4	2.7		
Economics	13.3	16.9	17.7		
Social and political science	14.5	9.0	7.3		
Law	0.3	1.1	1.7		
Literature	2.1	2.8	3.8		
Sport	37.3	21.0	19.2		
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**		

SOURCE: *ISTAT AND MINISTRY FOR UNIVERSITIES FIGURES FOR 1997/98, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.*

From the year in which they were first established, the success of university diplomas has been rising steadily. The number of students enrolling has increased every year, by 67.7 % between the 1992/93 and 1996/97 academic years and by 16.9 % between 1996/97 and 1997/98. A further expansion of the medical group has led to an overall growth in the university diploma system. In 1992/93, the number of students enrolled in this group was 6 558, compared with 1997/98 when the number reached 19 346. Despite the gradual fall in the percentage of students in sport institutes due to the steady rise in the provision of training in other disciplines, it will be observed that many continue to study in this area and recently there has even been an increase. The economics group has also been steadily expanding, whereas in the literary group good results have been achieved with courses associated with the conservation of the environment.

The strength of these training routes lies in the fact that they reflect occupational and vocational demands on the local labour market and production systems. This has led to strong links being established — especially in certain disciplines (engineering for example) — between the universities and the working world, as demonstrated by the existence of many consortia and conventions.

However, in certain cases the university format of the diplomas may detract from their specifically vocational nature and lead to a teaching approach closer to the more theoretical and academic approaches adopted in 'long' degree courses. This is particularly evident in some types of courses where the subject taught, the teachers and the teaching materials are the same as those for degree courses.

3.2.4. The initial training system of the regions

(a) General characteristics

Initial vocational training can be subdivided into:

- basic post-compulsory training (level one);
- post-diploma and post-degree training (level two).

There are also courses for special target groups (the disabled, migrants, former drug addicts, ex-prisoners, etc.).

Over the past few years, however, this classification has gradually been replaced by the European Social Fund classification based on strands and objectives. The ESF provides financial support for about 70 % of regional vocational training activities.

In quantitative terms, **basic training** is the largest part of the system. It offers training opportunities as an alternative to school. They are directed at youngsters who have difficulty with over-theoretical and abstract school models and who otherwise would finish or drop out of compulsory school, entering the labour market without any vocational knowledge and thus be at risk of cultural and social marginalisation.

The courses are structured as long cycles of generally two, but sometimes one or three, years, leading to a job qualification. In terms of organisation and to an extent of content, such training is similar in its characteristics to school-based training, and this entails the risk of overlapping and competing with the educational system.

The relative importance of such training in regionally planned provision was for many years very great throughout Italy. It declined considerably in the early 1990s, but this decline has now levelled off. The reform of the training system has made basic vocational training one of the streams, through which people up to the age of 18 may complete their compulsory education and training.

Within the arrangement for **integrated training** with State schools aimed at promoting links between the school system and the regional vocational training system, the most common procedure is that of post-qualification specialisation, i.e. two-year courses designed for young people from the vocational institutes who have obtained their third year qualification and who wish to continue their studies by specialising in the same stream. Under the Ministerial Decree of 15 April 1994, State vocational institutes are obliged to offer post-qualification training integrated with the regional vocational training system in order to make the courses relate more closely to jobs and create effective links with the labour market. The training stream consists of three areas: two for which the school is responsible and one for which the regional training system is responsible. It leads to a double final qualification: the vocational certificate (*maturità professionale*) and the regional certificate (*qualifica regionale*).

The percentage of **level 2 training** is still low but is rising. Over the past few years this type of medium- to high-level training has become far more popular.

The increase in the number of young people completing upper secondary school education and obtaining the diploma tends to defer the need for vocational training at tertiary level and has caused an explosion in the demand for post-diploma courses (within and outside school, university and non-university). This has led to the need to develop this segment of training, in particular by splitting it into a number of training routes that can reflect the various demands expressed by users.

The courses generally take the form of short one-year and, in a few rare cases two-year, cycles. They are aimed at young people who have taken their diploma of upper secondary education. This type of training is characterised by its high level of experimentation and the marked variety in methodologies and teaching content.

Training for special target groups embraces a wide and varied mixture of intervention measures. These include: initiatives aimed at groups at risk of exclusion (the disabled or disadvantaged, including immigrants, prisoners, drug addicts and former drug addicts), initiatives for women and training courses provided for in specific State or regional laws.

The right of the disabled to training has been laid down by Law 845 of 1978 and confirmed by Law 104 of 1992, which gives the regions the task of promoting vocational guidance and qualification for disabled people, according to their individual abilities and potential.

Under annual vocational training plans, the regions also define measures to support the entry of the disabled and people at risk of marginalisation into the working world. Further legislative references to promoting their integration are to be found in the regulations on apprenticeship, training/work contracts and placements, all of which contain clauses favouring the disabled. Attention is focused not only on training schemes in the narrow sense but also on experiments in guided integration into work.

Community guidelines and ESF resources have considerably boosted training for special target groups (the disabled and the disadvantaged). Many of the training schemes brought into being for these groups are today financed by recourse to Community funds, in particular those assigned to strand 3, Objective 3. This identifies four categories of target groups: migrants, immigrants and nomads; the physically or mentally disabled; prisoners, former prisoners and drug addicts; older unemployed adults and the poor. In addition to the funds to support Objective 3 there are the opportunities arising from the two elements in the European Community's 'Employment' initiative, which are directed to disadvantaged groups, 'Integra' and 'Horizon'.

In line with the guidelines laid down by the European Community, the area of 'women's training' has been expanding greatly over the last few years, with the aim of raising the standard of women's occupational skills. It could be said that there has been a 'happy convergence' between the guidelines laid down by the European Community and national and regional policies on this issue. The development of women's training has been boosted by the activation of the Community programmes for equal opportunities launched from 1982 onwards. This convergence has given Italian women the incentive to take vocational training courses, a trend that has increased markedly over the past two decades in line with the growing propensity of women to enter the labour market.

Therefore, throughout the 1980s, with the support of the European Social Fund, a specific training provision for women has been built up in Italy. The aim has been to promote the integration of women in the labour market (initial training) and their continuation on that market (continuing vocational training), and to encourage them to enter non-traditional sectors of the economy in non-traditional working roles. It should be pointed out that, in addition to European Social Fund financing, there has been an increase over the past 10 years — in particular with effect from Law 125 of 1991 on equal opportunities — in training activities financed out of both national and regional funds. Contributions have been made to those activities by many bodies: public and private sector concerns, local agencies, public authorities and union and cultural associations.

(b) The structural characteristics of training provided by the regions

Vocational training courses are administered to an extent by bodies coming directly under the regional authorities, but mainly by bodies operating under a contract, i.e. unions, employers, religious bodies or others. To a great extent the locations of the courses are public or contract-linked training centres, but there are also 'occasional' locations of which the number is tending to increase with the adoption of tendering mechanisms for the award of training activities.

In the 1996/97 training year, according to the figures emerging from the survey conducted by ISFOL, a total of 21 132 courses were organised in all the Italian regions, although it should be borne in mind that some regions supplied incomplete figures. This number exceeds the figure for the previous year and continues the tendency over the past few years for the volume of training provided by the regions to grow, although there are marked differences geographically.

Out of a total of 12 135 initial training courses (including courses for special target groups), 42.4 % (5 147) consist of preliminary qualification courses, 41.6 % (5 047) are level 2 courses and 16.3 % (2 336) are 'special' courses. The remaining 4.4 % are initial training courses for linking and integration or for categories defined by law.

Table 26. **Initial training courses, by type and region, 1996/97**

Region	Level 1	Level 2	Persons at risk of exclusion	Others	Total
Piedmont	429	227	121	0	777
Valle d'Aosta	3	7	4	0	14
Lombardy	147	832	100	158	1 237
Autonomous province of Trento	250	80	37	96	463
Autonomous province of Bolzano	151	63	22	0	236
Veneto	600	346	117	0	1 063
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	108	152	45	44	349
Liguria	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Emilia-Romagna	125	636	167	143	1 071
Tuscany	140	507	129	66	842
Umbria	35	2	21	0	58
Marche	155	240	51	0	446
Lazio	543	315	52	20	930
Abruzzi	161	110	58	0	329
Molise	48	94	(1)	0	142
Campania	114	202	80	0	396
Apulia	267	258	96	0	621
Basilicata	149	138	24	0	311
Calabria	73	137	22	0	232
Sicily (1)	1 546	505	208	0	2 259
Sardinia (1)	103	196	60	0	359
North	1 813	2 343	613	441	5 210
Centre	873	1 064	253	86	2 276
South	2 461	1 640	548	0	4 649
Italy	**5 147**	**5 047**	**1 414**	**527**	**12 135**

n.a. = Not available.
(1) Estimated data.

SOURCE: ***REGIONAL DATA, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.***

In general, there has been more training activity in northern Italy, where 42.9 % of courses are held. In central Italy, most of the training is concentrated in Tuscany and Lazio (77.8 % of initial training courses in the area), whereas in southern Italy the pattern of distribution is more or less even. The distribution of courses by type of training also differs geographically. In northern Italy, 34.8 % of the courses held were level 1, 45.0 % level 2. In the central regions, level 1 courses amounted to 38.3 %, level 2 to 46.7 %. In southern Italy, 52.9 % of the initial training activities were directed towards level 1 training and 35.3 % towards level 2 training. Courses for people at risk of exclusion and other types of courses, compared with the total volume of initial training in each individual geographical area, accounted for 20.2 % in the north, 14.9 % in the centre and 11.8 % in the south. The general picture that emerges is of a provision of training strongly directed towards improving the practical expertise of the people already working in northern Italy, whereas, especially in the south, the area grappling with the major unemployment problems, the most common courses are those providing basic skills.

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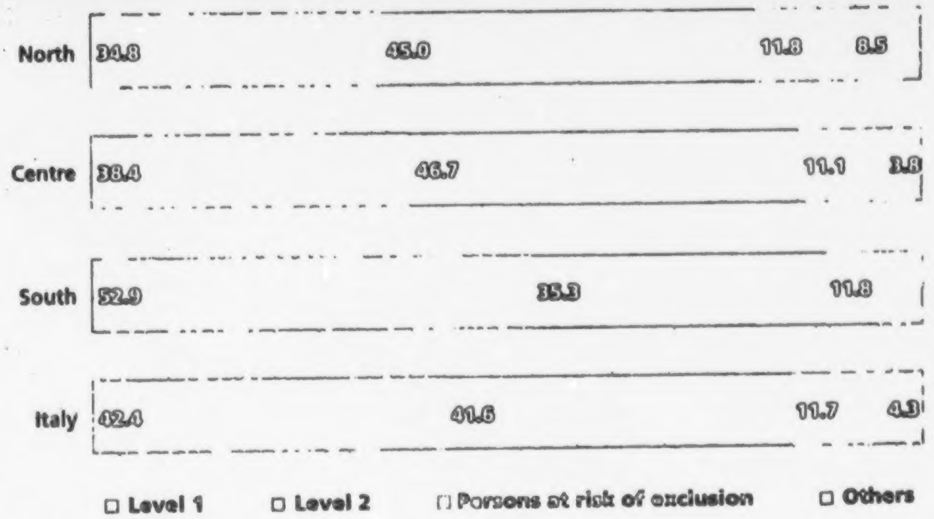
Figure 15. **Initial training courses, by type of course and geographical area, 1996/97 (in %)**



SOURCE: REGIONAL DATA, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The composition of courses by sectoral skill and type shows that, in level 1 training, they are basically evenly distributed between industry and craft trades (49.2 %) and service sector activities (49.7 %). They are usually seen as channels of training for young people who have dropped out of the education system. They are courses preparing for extremely practical job profiles, almost always in sectors also covered by the vocational and technical institutes, although the training models adopted by the latter are more theoretical and are designed to provide less practical skills.

In the industrial field, the largest number of basic training courses are in sectors associated with the mechanical and metal engineering, and electrical/electronic industries. There is also a reasonable provision of training for the creative crafts sector (for example for ceramic technicians, decorators and engravers).

Most of the training for the service sector is directed at office work (for example, junior secretaries). There are courses in hairdressing and beauty care as well as catering. These are followed by socio-educational services (for example for people working in schools and childcare) as well as information technology (video terminal operators, general operators and applications programmers).

In the activities defined as level 2, 81.1 % of the training available is concentrated in the service sector, especially in office work and information technology. It should be borne in mind that level 2 activities are school or extra-school courses, and it is not uncommon for them to be directed towards graduates as well. These are courses designed to supplement vocational learning acquired at school with a view to the effective integration into the labour market of people with medium to high or high level certificates of studies.

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Table 27 **Courses in the regions, by sectoral skill (ISFOL classification) and type of training, 1996/97 (in %)**

Sector (ISFOL classification)	**Type of course** **Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Special courses**	**Total**
Agriculture	**1.1**	**2.0**	**7.9**	**4.2**
Industry and craft trades	**49.2**	**16.9**	**30.8**	**25.3**
Non-metallic ores	–	0.1	–	0.1
Mechanical and metal engineering	17.7	6.9	8.2	9.1
Electrical and electronic engineering	14.3	3.6	3.6	5.5
Chemistry	0.1	0.4	-	0.2
Building	1.3	1.6	0.8	1.5
Timber, furniture, furnishings	1.1	0.4	0.3	0.5
Graphics, photography and paper technology	2.5	1.5	2.2	1.5
Food industry	0.8	0.6	0.7	1.1
Textile industry	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.3
Clothing industry	3.7	0.7	1.6	1.6
Creative craft trades	7.3	1.0	12.6	3.9
Tertiary activities	**49.7**	**81.1**	**61.3**	**70.5**
Hairdressing, beauty care	9.6	0.3	0.6	2.6
Tourism	0.9	7.4	0.7	2.4
Entertainment	0.2	1.3	0.9	0.8
Office work	14.5	26.1	4.8	25.5
Cooperatives	–	0.2	0.1	0.6
Catering	8.1	1.3	3.1	3.1
Credit and insurance	0.1	0.8	–	0.6
Promotion and advertising	0.6	5.0	0.4	2.3
Retail distribution	0.9	0.9	21.4	3.2
Transport	0.1	0.4	0.8	1.1
Ecology and the environment	0.1	3.8	0.2	1.7
Information technology	7.0	22.5	5.8	13.7
Cultural heritage	0.2	1.7	–	0.6
Socio-educational services	7.1	8.9	22.0	11.0
Miscellaneous	0.4	0.4	0.3	1.1
Overall total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

SOURCE: VOCATIONAL TRAINING PLANS OF THE REGION, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The courses aiming at special groups are mainly in the sectors of socio-educational services, retail distribution and creative craft trades.

(c) Participation in regional training

In the 1996/97 training year the regional vocational training system catered for a total of 406 920 people, an increase of more than 70 000 people over the previous year. There were 205 917 (50.6 % of the total) in initial training.

Table 28. **Trainees enrolled in initial vocational training courses, by type and region, 1996/97**

Region	Level 1	Level 2	Persons at risk of exclusion	Others	Total
Piedmont	8 311	4 156	1 621	0	14 088
Valle d'Aosta	131	104	33	0	268
Lombardy	2 872	14 138	1 467	3 471	21 948
Autonomous province of Trento	4 200	1 415	290	1 970	7 875
Autonomous province of Bolzano	2 960	1 179	219	0	4 358
Veneto	11 295	5 665	1 309	0	18 269
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	1 725	2 473	506	1 055	5 759
Liguria	1 000	900	116	46	2 062
Emilia-Romagna	2 506	14 682	2 517	2 761	22 466
Tuscany	1 909	8 179	849	1 506	12 443
Umbria	383	111	181	0	675
Marche	2 522	3 918	635	0	7 075
Lazio	10 465	6 094	976	411	17 946
Abruzzi	2 716	2 117	681	0	5 514
Molise	641	1 021	75	0	1 737
Campania	1 830	3 063	642	0	5 535
Apulia	3 710	4 830	1 018	0	9 558
Basilicata	1 992	2 016	287	0	4 295
Calabria	891	2 129	352	0	3 372
Sicily (1)	25 448	7 711	2 447	0	35 606
Sardinia (1)	1 502	2 880	686	0	5 068
North	35 000	44 712	8 078	9 303	97 093
Centre	15 279	18 302	2 641	1 917	38 139
South	38 730	25 767	6 188	0	70 685
Italy	**89 009**	**88 781**	**16 907**	**11 220**	**205 917**

(1) Estimated.

SOURCE: ***REGIONAL DATA, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.***

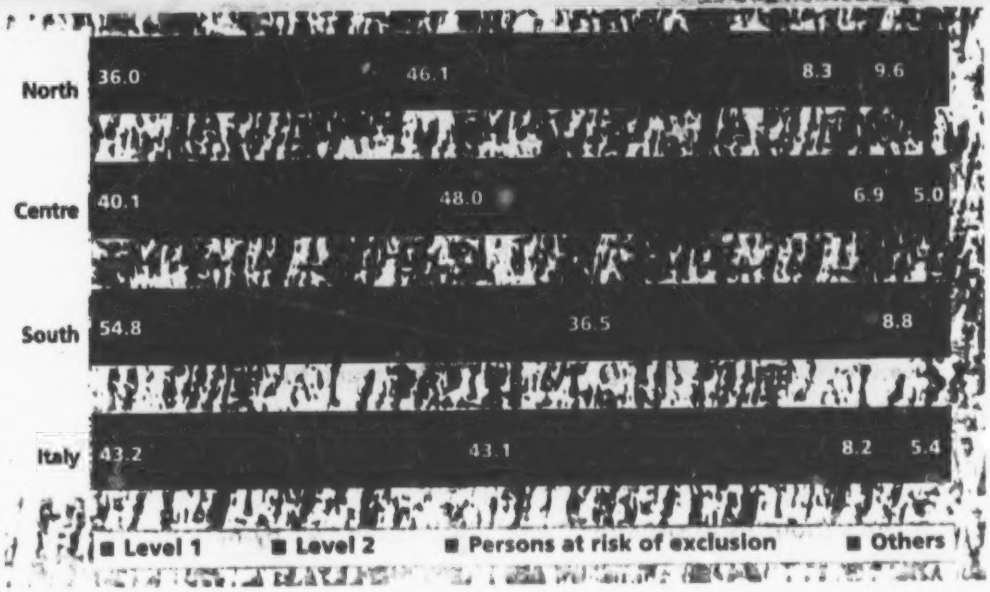
A figure of 43.2 % of the participants in initial vocational training courses provided by the region are concentrated in level 1 activities, almost the same proportion as those taking level 2 courses (43.1 %). Compared with previous years there has been a considerable increase in participation at level 2 reflecting the steady increase in the provision of training at that level.

The largest number of trainees is to be found in the north, where there are over 97 093 (47.2 % of the total). Then comes the south with 70 685 trainees (34.3 %) and the centre with 38 139 trainees (18.5 %).

In the north, 36 % of trainees attend level 1 courses and 46.1 % attend level 2 courses. In central Italy, attendance at level 1 courses amounts to 40.1 % and at level 2 courses to 48.0 %. In the south, those enrolled for level 1 courses amount to 54.8 % and for level 2 courses 36.5 %.

Another consideration is the number of trainees on each course. This figure rises from the south to the north of the country. Whereas in southern Italy each course is attended by an average of 15 trainees, in central Italy the number is 16 and in northern Italy it is 22.

Figure 16. **Trainees on initial training courses, by type of course and geographical area, 1996/97 (in %)**



*SOURCE: **REGIONAL DATA, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.***

(d) Multi-regional activities

To complete the picture of initial vocational training, mention should be made of certain courses provided under the multi-regional operational programmes to implement Objectives 1, 3 and 4, for which the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is directly responsible.

These measures are directed towards the training, retraining and redevelopment of various types of users:

- young first-time jobseekers;
- young people and adults without educational qualifications or with a 'weak' academic and/or vocational profile, or in general those at risk of social exclusion;
- women with job skills unsuited to the labour market, who are in search of employment or whose employment is at risk;
- workers whose employment is at risk, or who are working in sectors likely to undergo structural change in the economic and production system;
- young people taken on under training/work or apprenticeship contracts;
- public administration officials.

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Another field of intervention for the multi-regional operational plans is improving the management and organisation of vocational training itself, through efforts to enhance the system and to train the trainers.

In particular the 'Employment emergency' operational plan under Objective 1 is deployed in situations

- arising from the restructuring and redevelopment of major public and private sector production bodies,
- in which the economic system is unable to create employment, and
- attributable to an unforeseeable and critical conjuncture of economic and social factors calling for rapid and flexible action.

The 'Training employment' operational programme under Objective 3 is directed, by coordinating national labour policy with local reality, towards extending the employment base, tackling the problems associated with both the first entry of young people to the labour market and the return to the labour market of those made redundant in the production system.

The 'Retraining and re-skilling' operational sub-programme under Objective 4, together with analyses and pilot projects designed to anticipate qualitative and quantitative changes in the demand for labour, is implemented through training measures aimed at re-skilling, retraining and updating the skills of workers affected by substantial changes in the production system.

The remaining courses are related to innovatory actions directed towards conducting research and experiments and towards implementing new methods related to the overall structure of training measures, reconciling the requirements of the various local situations with those laid down by national employment policy.

The great variety of those benefiting from the provision of training is reflected by an equally broad range of types of bodies administering the courses: training organisations, guidance agencies, bilateral agencies, employers and consortia of employers, public sector bodies, regional authorities, local bodies and consortia of local bodies, universities and upper secondary schools.

The duration of courses also varies a good deal. They range from very short refresher schemes for civil servants (35 hours) to training courses for young people and adults lasting approximately 1 000 hours. It should be borne in mind, however, that irrespective of the length of pluriannual projects, courses are annual and those directed towards basic training are longer than refresher courses.

Of the planned courses put out to tender in 1997, 23.0 % were in the north-west of Italy, 15.7 % in the north-east, 29.1 % in central Italy and 32.2 % in the south. The courses were attended by 27 850 people, 32.2 % in the north-west of the country, 9.8 % in the north-east, 30.2 % in central Italy and 27.8 % in the south.

Table 29. **Participants in multi-regional operational programme courses, by geographical area, 1997**

Geographical area	**Participants**	**%**
North-west	8 966	32.2
North-east	2 732	9.8
Centre	8 411	30.2
South	7 741	27.8
Total	**27 850**	**100.0**

SOURCE: ***ISFOL.***

The largest number of participants are in the programme on 'retraining and re-skilling' which, because of its prevalence throughout Italy, accounts on its own for 44.9 % of recipients. The 'Southern Italy employment emergency', which caters for a further 23.7 % of recipients, comes next with 6 611 participants.

Table 30. **Participants in multi-regional operational programmes, by programme, 1997**

Multi-regional operational programme	**Participants**	**%**
940026/I/1 — Southern Italy 'Employment emergency' (Objective 1)	6 611	23.7
940028/I/1 — Southern Italy innovative actions (Objective 1)	1 240	4.4
940029/I/3 — Training employment (Objective 3)	4 615	16.6
940030/I/3 — Central and northern Italy innovative actions (Objective 3)	1 695	6.1
940032/I/4 — Central and northern Italy innovative actions (Objective 4)	1 189	4.3
940032RR/I/4 — Conversion and re-skilling (Objective 4)	12 500	44.9
Total	**27 850**	**100.0**

SOURCE: ***ISFOL.***

3.3. Apprenticeship and training/work contracts

3.3.1. General characteristics

Although the alternance training stream is recognised as a fundamental component of the vocational training system, it appears still to be weak and poorly structured in Italy. However, this component of the system is currently the focus of major reform projects which should promote its reactivation.

The main types of alternance training are apprenticeship and training/work contracts.

(a) Training/work contracts

The training/work contract *(contratto di formazione e lavoro — CFL)* has fulfilled an important role over the past 10 years as a preferred channel for access to the labour market for young people. The arrangement caters for young people aged from 15 to 32.

There are two types of contract:

- the type A contract is aimed at the acquisition of advanced or middle-level vocational skills. The maximum duration is 24 months and there are 130 hours of theoretical training in the case of advanced skills and 80 hours for middle-level skills;
- the type B contract facilitates integration into work by providing work experience that helps a young person adapt his or her vocational abilities to the production and organisational context. It may be for up to 12 months and includes a minimum of 20 hours' theoretical training.

In initiating a training/work contract, the employer has to draw up a training plan setting out the 'timing and procedures for the conduct of training and work'. This must be approved by the Regional Employment Board (*commissione regionale per l'impiego*). No approval is required if the training schemes comply with the regulations agreed between the social partners in the course of national bargaining.

The employer is responsible for providing training, which must be conducted 'as an alternative to the performance of work'. In other words, no form of on-the-job training, side by side with other workers, is permitted.

At the end of the contract the employer may recruit the contractual worker for an indefinite period or discontinue the employment relationship. Nevertheless, in order to activate other training/work contracts, the employer must have recruited for permanent jobs at least 60 % of those whose contracts have expired in the preceding 24 months.

(b) Apprenticeship

Introduced in 1955 by Law 25, apprenticeship is a contract of employment that on the one hand places an obligation upon the employer to provide adequate vocational preparation by having the apprentice work side by side with skilled personnel and, on the other, imposes an obligation on the young person to attend training courses outside the workplace. The regions have the responsibility for implementing training programmes for apprentices. Nevertheless, although there are many regional regulations providing incentives for the recruitment of young people under apprenticeship contracts, for the stabilisation of their occupational status and for the reimbursement of training costs incurred by employers, in only a few cases have arrangements been made to set up the external training courses.

To make apprenticeship a more effective training instrument, Law 196 of 24 June 1997, 'Regulations on the promotion of employment', outlined a new model of apprenticeship. This includes:

- extending the age group concerned: the maximum age at which a young person can take up an apprenticeship is raised from 20 to 24 (26 for southern Italian regions, while 29 continues to be the age limit for the craft trade sector). The minimum age is 16;
- a reduction in the maximum duration of the contract from 5 to 4 years, with a minimum limit of 18 months;
- a lifting of the restrictions on educational qualifications required for access to the apprenticeship contract;
- the average number of hours to be devoted to training outside the workplace is 120, with tax and other contribution concessions being granted to employers on condition that the apprentices actually attend the training activity.

The laws, regulations and implementing directives are being defined and preliminary trial projects have been launched.

(c) Reform of alternance training

The 1996 labour agreement sets, as one of its priority objectives, the re-launching of alternance training by reinforcing the training component in both types of 'mixed' contracts. Law 196 of 1997 implemented the changes planned for the part devoted to apprenticeship only. In parallel, the European Commission criticised Italy's training/ work contracts, because the contribution concessions to employers were not justified by an adequate and genuine training commitment or by the creation of additional employment.

As a result, the strategy for the reform of alternance training has been reviewed. The hypothesis starting to take shape is that of enhancing apprenticeship further so that it becomes the sole contract for the integration of young people up to the age of 25 in the labour market. For young people over that age a new integration contract would be established. This would entail concessionary contributions for employers, the volume of which would depend on the level of difficulties of the social groups concerned.

3.3.2 The evolution of the number of persons with training contracts

In 1997, 393 138 apprenticeship contracts were concluded. In the same year workers launched in the working world under training/work contracts numbered 264 405. This means that the two types of contract combined accounted for 10.9 % of total employment in the 15–32 age group and 14.1 % of those in paid employment in 1997.

An analysis of the development of these two arrangements over the 1990s (Table 31) shows that the numbers in apprenticeship have gradually been falling, although it retains a far from negligible role, especially in craft firms and in manufacturing industries.

A more detailed analysis of the distribution of apprenticeship in Italy and the procedures for the use of this type of contract can be conducted by considering the figures from the archives of the *Istituto Nazionale di Previdenza Sociale (INPS)*, the national insurance institute, which count the pool of apprentices month by month.

Looking at the development of the pool of apprentices between June 1996 and October 1997 (Table 32), a first observation is the marked cyclical variation in the number of apprentices. In summer periods the pool expands substantially, and then shrinks again in the winter. Even so the general trend is negative.

A second observation of interest is the difference between the figures provided by the Labour Market Observation Centre and the INPS figures. They differ significantly: the first set refers to the annual flow of all contracts entered into, whereas the second set is a 'snapshot' of the pool of apprenticeships each month. However, the apprenticeship contract may be for up to four years (five years under the former regulations), which means that the pool of contracts in existence at any given point should at least be greater than the number of contracts initiated in a given year.

Table 31. **Apprenticeship contracts concluded and workers starting a training/work contract, 1991-97, by geographical area (absolute figures)**

Year	North	Centre	South	Italy
		Apprenticeship		
1991	310 109	97 776	115 882	523 767
1992	297 355	99 097	109 282	505 734
1993	269 799	88 922	91 044	449 765
1994	261 437	88 962	76 336	426 735
1995	249 469	93 431	75 333	418 233
1996	256 673	90 929	66 290	413 892
1997	249 254	83 532	60 352	393 138
		Training/work *(CFL)* contracts		
1991	185 020	66 371	64 952	316 343
1992	143 109	56 768	55 838	255 715
1993	103 260	41 656	44 036	188 952
1994	134 392	43 145	43 579	221 116
1995	157 640	43 744	47 283	248 667
1996	165 906	48 884	54 430	269 220
1997	148 834	50 175	65 396	264 405

SOURCE: LABOUR MARKET OBSERVATION CENTRE FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

Table 32. **Numbers of apprentices, June 1996 - October 1997**

Month	Apprentices	Month	Apprentices
1996		**1997**	
June	294 249	January	250 223
July	320 882	February	255 295
August	309 248	March	249 677
September	282 122	April	246 813
October	262 506	May	246 444
November	259 455	June	271 115
December	257 183	July	298 168
		August	286 830
		September	268 140
		October	298 556

SOURCE: INPS.

The big difference in the two sets of figures and the considerable monthly variations can be explained by the 'volatility' of the apprenticeship contract. Many contracts last for only a brief period, because apprenticeship is used as a device to cope with seasonal work or peak production times, or because apprentices break off the contract on being called up for national service or on changing their choice of work or type of work contract and so on.

From an ISFOL survey, it appears that about 30 % of apprenticeship contracts last no longer than six months and only 24 % exceed two years.

3.4. Continuing vocational training

With the absence of a structured system of continuing vocational training in Italy, it is hard to outline a consistent and comprehensive picture of the measures implemented by various bodies. Furthermore, because of the lack of attention devoted to this area of training provision up to a few years ago, it has been difficult to set up an information system that can reflect the many inputs.

The key providers of continuing training are varied: the regions, the ministries responsible for the multi-regional programmes of the European Social Fund, private companies and also other bodies such as the chambers of commerce and the public administration for the benefit of its own employees.

In order to identify the role of continuing training in the national vocational training system, the sections that follow will offer a picture of the ventures implemented by the various parties. It has not been possible to arrive at a consolidated picture, however, since the data available refer to different years, and, on occasion, cover two or more years. In some cases it has not been possible to acquire any quantitative data.

3.4.1. Schemes promoted by the regions

In 1996–97, the regions provided 8 997 continuing training courses, in other words courses for workers in employment, on 'job mobility registers' (³) or who have been placed on a temporary redundancy footing and the unemployed seeking other jobs (Table 33). About two thirds of the training has been for workers in employment, 2 560 courses have involved the unemployed or workers temporarily laid off or on 'job mobility registers' (³), whereas only 5.6 % of the courses have been aimed at critical employment, i.e. workers at risk of unemployment as a result of structural changes in the economy and production system.

As a result, in regional continuing training systems, most schemes are addressed to workers in employment, who presumably require measures to update their skills and bring them into line with production and organisational changes.

Overall in 1996/97, regional continuing training measures catered for 201 003 workers.

The geographical distribution of courses shows a considerable imbalance. It highlights the commitment of the northern Italian regions, which have provided over 68 % of continuing training schemes, in particular Emilia-Romagna and Lombardy, whereas only 12.7 % of continuing vocational training was conducted in the south.

In making distinctions by type of activity, it will be noted that whereas in the central and northern Italian regions continuing training is directed mainly towards employed workers, in the south it involves above all unemployed workers or those temporarily laid off or on 'job mobility registers' (³).

(³) See Annex 3.

Table 33 **Continuing vocational training courses provided by the regions, 1996/97**

Regions	**Unemployed**	**Critical employment (*)**	**Employed**	**Total**
Piedmont	488	0	306	794
Valle d'Aosta	6	0	54	60
Lombardy	152	152	1 408	1 712
Autonomous province of Trento	26	0	197	223
Autonomous province of Bolzano	9	0	12	21
Veneto	85	0	370	455
Friuli	180	0	476	656
Liguria	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Emilia-Romagna	371	125	1 714	2 210
Tuscany	189	10	541	740
Umbria	63	160	35	258
Marche	43	0	181	224
Lazio	357	54	94	505
Abruzzi	29	0	87	116
Molise	12	0	0	12
Campania	20	0	38	58
Apulia	46	0	0	46
Basilicata	0	0	110	110
Calabria	148	0	112	260
Sicily (**)	184	0	81	265
Sardinia (**)	152	0	120	272
North	1 317	277	4 537	6 131
Centre	652	224	851	1 727
South	591	0	548	1 139
Italy	**2 560**	**501**	**5 936**	**8 997**

(*) Workers at risk of unemployment due to structural changes in the economic and production system.

(**) Estimated.

n.a. = not available.

SOURCE: REGIONAL FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

An analysis of the development of continuing training activities promoted by the regions over the past three years highlights the incentives provided for the development of this part of the training system by the adoption of Objective 4 in the new European Structural Funds planning programme.

Compared with 1994/95, there has been a 72.8 % increase in continuing training courses, with the largest percentage increase occurring in the northern regions. In particular the marked variation between activities conducted in 1994/95 and 1995/96 can be attributed to the approval and implementation of the various regional subprogrammes under Objective 4.

Table 34. Continuing training courses by geographical area, 1994/95 to 1996/97

Geographical area	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
North	3 728	6 701	6 131
Centre	929	1 186	1 727
South	549	605	1 139
Italy	**5 206**	**8 492**	**8 997**

SOURCE: *ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.*

The increase in the amount of funds from ESF Objective 4 resources has been accompanied by greater attention on the part of the regions to the planning of training provision for employed or unemployed workers. Incentives for this are provided for under the Labour Agreement and by Law 236/93.

Table 35. Measures launched in the three-year period 1994–96, under Objective 4 projects

Regions	Measures	Participants
Piedmont	1 804	23 292
Valle d'Aosta	81	2 858
Liguria	337	3 677
Lombardy	–	–
Autonomous province of Trento	128	18 065
Autonomous province of Bolzano	353	17 070
Veneto	n.a.	n.a.
Friuli	193	3 437
Emilia-Romagna	1 903	37 535
Tuscany	217	4 040
Umbria	60	682
Marche	–	–
Lazio	–	–
Total	**5 076**	**110 066**

n.a. = figures not available.

SOURCE: *ISFOL AND IGFOR/SIRGS FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.*

This stronger regional commitment to continuing training is also evident from a comparison of the figures for the regions' total continuing training activities (Table 33) with those for the actions launched and the participants in projects jointly funded out of Objective 4 resources (Table 35). In the three-year period 1994–96, 5 906 actions were launched under Objective 4, involving 118 074 workers — the figures refer to the central and northern regions (excluding Veneto) — whereas in 1996/97 alone the courses implemented in those same regions of central and northern Italy (excluding Veneto) amounted to 7 403.

3.4.2. Continuing training measures pursuant to Law 236 of 1993

Law 236/93, under which part of the resources derived from the employers' contributions of 0.30 % of the wage bill are allocated to continuing training measures, has only been implemented in the past few years. At the end of 1996, in Circular 174, for the first time the Ministry of Labour published a call for tender worth ITL 207 billion. A second call for tender was prepared in 1998 and published in Circular 37.

The difficulties encountered by the regions in implementing Objective 4 led to different options being adopted in implementing Law 236, especially as regards procedures. The mechanism identified for the allocation of resources — order of presentation of applications and meeting requirements as to suitability, with priority being given to schemes agreed by the social partners — enabled the arrangement to be set up rapidly.

The resources have been allocated to the following types of action:

- **system-related actions**, designed to launch processes that are innovatory in terms of access to continuing training, improving the quality of the organisation and management of training provision and the development of employment. These have been planned by the regions based on strategic guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Labour and the social partners;
- **actions for the re-skilling and retraining of training agency operators**: these consist of schemes aimed at supporting job mobility routes outside and inside the agency. In the latter case, measures are designed to impart skills that can be used for the development of continuing training, guidance and alternance promotion systems. These measures are planned and implemented by the regions on the basis of agreements with the social partners and in accordance with guidelines laid down at national level;
- **in-company training initiatives**: here the objective is to promote innovatory experimental schemes and to reproduce on a large scale the models developed in terms of procedures, organisation, content and goals. The target groups for the measures may be workers in employment, or persons undertaking socially useful work, or persons in employment but at risk (for example workers who are temporarily laid off). For 1998 the sphere of company training initiatives has been extended to include 'individual training initiatives' (*azioni di formazione individuale*), which consist of measures designed to balance and develop the skills already possessed by workers in employment, based on plans drawn up by the individual workers.

At the time of writing only a partial assessment of the workings of the mechanism can be made. Considerable success has been achieved by the measures devoted to company training, so much so that in certain regions the resources made available under the first call for tender were exhausted in a single day. In the second call for tender, therefore, the budget for this type of action was doubled.

With regard to the system-related actions, the second circular reduced the amount of resources available with the objective of channelling them to a smaller number of schemes that gave greater guarantees of quality.

ISFOL has drawn up an estimate of the target groups involved in the various schemes on the basis of the maximum cost stated in the call for tenders.

Table 36. **Resources committed and estimated number of participants under measures funded by Law 236, 1997 and 1998**

Action	1997		1998	
	Resources (billion ITL)	Number of participants planned	Resources (billion ITL)	Number of participants planned
System-related actions	80	25 600	20	6 400
Training agency operators (Law 40/87)	65	1 400	40	870
Company training	62	65 500	114.5	121 000
Individual training			12.5	10 000

SOURCE: ***MINISTRY OF LABOUR FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.***

3.4.3. Measures promoted at national level under the European Social Fund

With the help of the joint financing provided by the structural funds, certain central State authorities are also promoting continuing training measures within the context of multi-regional schemes. Among these, the most substantial is the activity promoted by the Ministry of Labour:

- in pursuance of Objective 4, 2 350 continuing training measures were approved for the three-year period 1994–96. Of these, 830, involving 7 418 students, have been launched;
- in pursuance of Objective 1 for 1996, 493 measures directed towards employed persons in companies in southern Italy and 204 for the long-term unemployed, have been approved. The first type of activity involved 19 856 participants, whereas it is planned to involve some 5 000 people in measures directed towards the long-term unemployed.

Other measures have been promoted by the Ministry of Labour in pursuance of Objective 3. These are directed towards the unemployed, both those previously self-employed and those in paid employment, who have been temporarily laid off or are on 'job mobility registers'. The Ministry of Universities is also responsible for continuing vocational training measures under the multi-regional operating programme, Objective 1, 'Research and technological development'. No figures are available on either of these schemes.

Lastly, the Ministry of Education is planning training for adults without a vocational qualification under a Multi-regional operating programme, in pursuance of Objective 1. For 1995/96, 24 measures aimed at a user group of 2 280 people, have been approved.

3.4.4. Training activities in the workplace

In addition to the various institutional-type measures, some training is conducted by employers for their own employees. Such activities may be funded solely out of the employers' own resources or they may be eligible for a contribution from public bodies. For example, the regions — as part of their continuing training activity — fund schemes conducted by training agencies or by employers themselves. Under Law 236/93, on the other hand, State support for company training courses can be paid directly to the companies.

The somewhat sketchy information available provides an outline picture of all the activities conducted within the workplace. On the other hand, there is no information shedding light on the proportion of such training funded out of public resources, and therefore already accounted for by the activities of those public bodies, and what volume of training is funded exclusively by employers out of their own resources.

The sources of information available on continuing training conducted within companies are a survey conducted by ISTAT in collaboration with ISFOL (*) on the training activities of concerns employing at least 10 people and the annual (European) Community Labour Force Survey. The first survey can be regarded now as somewhat out of date as it refers to 1993. The second survey, which is conducted annually, refers only to activities during a four-week period, and figures for the year as a whole cannot be derived from it. Furthermore, the ISTAT-ISFOL survey concentrates on the features of the training bodies, whereas the Labour Force Survey refers to individuals, i.e. the workers being trained.

Nevertheless, a combined review of both sources produces significant figures. In March 1997 in Italy, 352 426 workers received specific training within the workplace. Compared with 1993, the number of workers trained has risen substantially, in both absolute and proportional terms (Table 37). The percentage of those trained out of the total number of employees has risen from 0.98 to 1.75 % and the same percentage by comparison with the total labour force has increased from 0.88 to 1.54 % over the same period.

Table 37. **Participation in continuing training activities in the workplace, 1997**

Year	Absolute figures	Number trained as % of employees	Number trained as % of labour force
1993	199 744	0.98	0.88
1994	213 950	1.06	0.94
1995	248 183	1.24	1.09
1996	310 065	1.54	1.36
1997	352 426	1.75	1.54

SOURCE: ISTAT AND EUROSTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL

The ISTAT-ISFOL survey shows that 888 141 employees took part in the training courses within the companies taken into consideration in 1993 (*). It may be presumed that over the five-year period the trends in these figures will be similar to those set out in the table above.

The same survey also shows that the attitude of employers to training is inversely proportional to the size of the company. In 1993 only 4.6 % of concerns with a workforce of 10 to 19 people engaged in continuing training, whereas this percentage rises to 88.3 % in the case of concerns with a workforce of more than 1 000 people (Table 38).

(*) Cf. *La formazione del personale nelle imprese*, ISTAT, Rome 1996.

(*) This refers to companies employing at least 10 people in all economic sectors except for agriculture, health, education and non-saleable services.

Table 38 Companies providing training, by company size, 1993 (in %)

Size of workforce	% of companies having training courses
10–19	4.6
20–49	9.3
50–99	19.4
100–249	33.6
250–499	54.9
500–999	75.5
1 000 and over	88.3
Total	**9.4**

SOURCE: ISTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL, 1996.

Looking at the nature of participants, the most numerous age group attending training has been that of workers aged 35–49, followed by those aged 25–34.

Table 39 Characteristics of participation in continuing vocational training activities, 1997

	% of participants
Age	
15–24	10.0
25–34	29.6
35–49	47.6
50–64	12.3
65 and over	0.4
Total	**100.0**
Objective	
Training for integration in the working world	25.2
Job advancement	24.5
Job retraining	2.4
Other objectives	47.9
Total	**100.0**
Duration	
Less than a week	32.0
Less than a month	25.3
Less than three months	17.8
Less than six months	10.5
Less than a year	9.0
One year and over	5.4
Total	**100.0**

SOURCE: ISTAT AND EUROSTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The breakdown of training activities by objective shows almost identical percentages for preliminary integration and occupational advancement on the one hand, and on the other the introduction of new technologies and changes in company organisations (these actions have been included under the heading of 'other objectives'). Only a very small percentage of those undergoing training are involved in continuing training designed for occupational retraining.

Regarding the duration of the initiatives, on the whole the training has been for short or very short periods, less than a week or a month, confirming the findings of the survey in 1993 which estimated that the average duration of training courses organised by private concerns is 41 hours.

This brevity suggests that continuing training is generally directed towards middle- and senior-ranking practitioners (executives, managers, etc.). In Table 40, the breakdown of participants is given by occupational category, as found in the ISTAT-ISFOL survey. It has been confirmed by the figures on the breakdown of participants by level of education according to the Labour Force Survey (Table 41).

It should also be borne in mind that, in the 1993 survey, 6.3 % of the managers accounted for 55.0 % of the whole occupational category in the companies concerned.

Table 40. **Participants in courses, by occupational category, 1993 (in %)**

Occupational category	**% of participants**
Managers, senior executives	6.3
Middle-ranking executives	8.7
Clerical workers	57.8
Skilled workers	21.5
Unskilled personnel	5.6
Total	**100.0**

SOURCE: ISTAT SURVEY, 1996.

Table 41. **Participation in continuing training, by level of education, 1997 (in %)**

Educational qualifications	**% of participants**
Degree	23.9
Upper secondary education diploma	47.5
Lower secondary education diploma	25.6
No secondary education diploma	3.0
Total	**100.0**

SOURCE: EUROSTAT FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

3.4.5. The provision of training by the public administration for its own employees

In addition to the training provided by companies for their own employees, there is a similar commitment by the public administration on behalf of its own employees.

In 1996 this training provision consisted of the conduct of 5 067 courses. Within the public administration, the departments offering the most extensive training were the central authorities.

Table 42. **Training provided by the public administration, 1996**

Public administration	**Number of courses**	**% of courses**	**Participants**	**% participation**
Central authorities	3 440	68.0	96 492	74.2
Non-economic public bodies (1)	476	9.4	12 396	9.5
Autonomous concerns (2)	518	10.2	16 747	12.9
Research bodies (3)	633	12.4	4 485	3.4
Total	**5 067**	**100.0**	**130 120**	**100.0**

(1) These include: ACI, CONI, INAIL, Inpdap. No figures have been received for INPS and Ipsema.
(2) These include: AIMA, ANAS, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti, firefighting force, State monopolies.
(3) These include: CNR, ENEA, Ispesl, ISTAT, State Institute for Health.

SOURCE: CIVIL SERVICE DEPARTMENT.

Overall 130 120 people were involved in training courses.

It should be pointed out that although it was in ministerial departments where the largest number of civil servants were trained, only 33.4 % of the personnel in service took advantage of these training initiatives and of these only 20.9 % were women.

The target groups for the training were mainly middle- and senior-level managers and intermediate executives, because of the need for modernisation in the public administration.

3.4.6. Initiatives promoted by the chambers of commerce

The chambers of commerce are independent associations providing support to companies. They work through 131 special agencies that offer highly specialised services. Among these are training schemes.

With particular reference to continuing vocational training activities, in 1996 the chambers of commerce directly administered 484 courses and, through special associated agencies, they conducted 1 556. Overall, the number of participants was 49 859.

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Table 43. **Training conducted by chambers of commerce, by user group, 1996**

Type of user	**Number of courses**	**Participants**
Entrepreneurs and/or aspiring entrepreneurs	798	16 333
Managers and executives	360	8 491
Technicians and operators	481	14 595
Craftsmen	123	3 135
Other courses	278	7 305
Total	**2 040**	**49 859**

SOURCE: UNIONCAMERE-MICA, 1997 SURVEY.

Chapter 4

The funding of education and vocational training

4.1. The funding of general education

General spending on education by the Ministry of Education in 1997 amounted to over ITL 58 000 billion (*) (EUR 30.13 billion). This represents a slight increase in expenditure on personnel and the acquisition of goods and services.

In 1997, excluding expenditure on lower secondary education, spending on all levels rose compared with the previous year, although by moderate rates. The year in which the volume of spending by the Ministry of Education rose substantially was 1996, partly as a result of the renegotiation of contracts.

Table 44. **Expenditure by level of education, amounts earmarked in current billion (*) ITL, 1990 and 1995–97**

	Year			
Level of education	**1990**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
Nursery school	3 117.7	3 690.5	4 859.4	5 037.6
Elementary	11 845.7	12 197.7	16 623.4	16 957.6
Lower secondary	12 381.5	11 625.6	15 491.2	14 876.3
Upper secondary	12 433.3	13 577.0	17 761.3	17 973.1
Other expenditure (*)	1 071.4	2 597.6	3 467.3	3 469.8
Total	**40 909.6**	**43 688.4**	**58 202.6**	**58 354.4**
Value in billion EUR (**)	*21.12*	*22.56*	*30.05*	*30.13*

(*) The figures include the following items:
- expenditure on the State institutes of education;
- institutes for deaf mutes and the blind;
- non-State secondary education;
- cultural exchanges;
- school building and equipment.

(**) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: EDUCATION MINISTRY FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The private sector schools that exist at every level of the educational system are funded by the State only in special cases. Funding is in the form of grants or subsidies to support establishments meeting educational and social needs that cannot be met in public sector education.

According to Censis figures for the 1995/96 school year, private schools represent about 11.4 % of the total number of schools in Italy, but this proportion rises the higher the level of education. They account for 7.5 % of elementary schools, 8.6 % of lower secondary schools and 24.7 % of upper secondary schools. The pattern is not the same when one looks at the numbers of pupils attending those schools: 7.6 % of elementary school children go to private schools, 3.3 % of pupils go to private lower secondary schools and 7.3 % to private upper secondary schools.

The 1997 budget of the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research (MURST), for university teaching alone, is over ITL 10 000 billion (*), a

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(*) Billion is used throughout as denoting 1 000 million.

substantial increase over the previous year. The forecast for 1998 is that spending will be even higher, at over ITL 11 000 billion. The breakdown of resources by the main expenditure headings indicates that the resources devoted to scientific research over the past few years have risen (ITL 3 558 billion in 1997 and ITL 3 621.1 billion in 1998).

Table 45. **Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research spending on university education, 1991 and 1995-98 (in billion ITL)**

	Year				
	1991	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**
Forecast current expenditure	5 787.7	8 023.8	7 936.7	9 837.6	10 651.7
Capital account	883.0	653.4	622.3	474.4	676.6
Total	**6 670.7**	**8 677.2**	**8 559.0**	**10 312.0**	**11 328.3**
Value in billion EUR (*)	*3.44*	*4.48*	*4.42*	*5.32*	*5.85*
Spending on university education as % of total MURST spending	69.0	67.3	75.8	73.3	75.4

(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: MURST FORECASTS, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

Universities in the private sector aligned with public sector establishments and authorised to deliver legally recognised diplomas, like public universities, are funded by the Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research, and in part from students' fees. Private universities are also partially funded by local associations or foundations, while public universities, by virtue of their autonomy as universities, may accept financial contributions towards research.

4.2. The funding of vocational education

4.2.1. Regional spending on vocational training

The resources for regional expenditure on vocational training are derived from:

- State financing (through the regions' common fund) and revenue from regional taxes, mainly used to finance initial training;
- funds contributed by the ESF towards programmes co-financed at national level;
- revenue from the employers' contribution (0.3 % of their wage bills), which is placed in the vocational training rotating fund established by Outline Law 845/78. Two thirds of this amount goes to initial training and the balance of one third goes towards continuing vocational training (although in the future the whole of the employers' contribution should be channelled towards the development of continuing vocational training).

Preliminary estimates of expenditure in this field are always of great importance when analysing expenditure on vocational training, since they serve to provide a clear indication of current trends.

The following table shows the general trend in estimated spending at national level, giving the absolute figures from 1994 to 1997 as well as the variations recorded over these years. It is apparent from the table that, following the steep growth in 1995 to offset the delays in various regions in adjusting to the move from the ESF's previous six-year planning period to the current one, this growth in spending started to slow down in the last two years for which figures are available.

Table 46. Regional spending on vocational training, according to preliminary draft budgets (*), 1994–97

Year	Billion ITL (in brackets, equivalent in billion EUR) (**)	Variations in absolute figures	Indexed variations (previous year = 100)	Indexed variations (1994 = 100)	Indexed variations in constant ITL (1994 = 100)
1994	2 803.2 *(1.44)*	–	100.0	100.0	100.0
1995	3 795.6 *(1.96)*	992.4	135.4	135.4	128.9
1996	4 384.8 *(2.26)*	589.2	115.5	156.4	141.8
1997	4 833.9 *(2.49)*	449.1	110.2	172.4	152.4

(*) Annual budget estimates.
(**) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: REGIONAL BUDGET FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

The budgeted expenditure for 1995 amounted to ITL 3 795.6 billion (EUR 1.96 billion), ITL 992.4 billion more than in 1994. In 1996 it amounted to ITL 4 384.8 billion (EUR 2.26 billion), ITL 589.2 billion more than in 1995. Lastly, in 1997 it amounted to ITL 4 833.9 billion (EUR 2.49 billion), ITL 449.1 billion more than in 1996. Apart from the trends in absolute figures, however, the deceleration mentioned above is more clearly apparent from the variations by comparison with the index. Taking the level of spending for 1994 as 100, from 1994 to 1997 the rate of increase fell back steadily (over 35 % in 1994/95, 15 % in 1995/96 and 10.2 % in 1996/97).

Nevertheless for every year, there is a steady growth in the budget, although there are many doubts as to actual spending capacity.

An analysis of the breakdown of expenditure by regions shows that there has been a gradual increase in the amounts earmarked over the past three years.

In 1997, the overall expenditure (in other words including State contributions, ESF contributions and regional allocations) earmarked by the regions for vocational training amounted to ITL 4833.9 billion (EUR 2.49 billion), distributed as follows: 19.2 % in the north-western regions, 21.2 % in the north-eastern regions, 14.2 % in the regions of central Italy and 45.4 % in the south.

Table 47. **Regional spending on vocational training, according to the estimated budget, 1995–97**

Region	**Absolute figures (billion ITL)**			**% variations**	
	1995	**1996**	**1997**	**1996-95**	**1997-96**
Valle d'Aosta	22.6	28.6	27.5	26.5	– 3.8
Piedmont	221.1	342.9	231.9	55.1	– 32.4
Liguria	133.8	134.5	145.4	0.5	8.1
Lombardy	429.4	511.3	524.4	19.1	2.6
Veneto	400.1	542.0	334.9	35.5	– 38.2
Autonomous province of Trento	95.8	111.6	127.6	16.5	14.3
Autonomous province of Bolzano	112.1	116.3	137.0	3.7	17.8
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	110.1	96.2	100.0	– 12.6	4.0
Emilia-Romagna	322.5	305.3	323.3	– 5.3	5.9
Tuscany	102.9	72.4	200.2	– 29.6	176.5
Umbria	55.5	49.4	98.1	– 11.0	98.6
Marche	51.4	77.9	77.7	51.6	– 0.3
Lazio	326.4	357.6	310.3	9.6	– 13.2
Abruzzi	193.0	146.3	209.2	– 24.2	43.0
Molise	51.2	62.8	63.0	22.7	0.3
Campania	23.6	271.0	394.7	1 048.3	45.6
Apulia	140.5	38.9	154.1	– 72.3	296.1
Basilicata	198.1	190.4	167.6	– 3.9	– 12.0
Calabria	180.9	112.6	134.4	– 37.8	19.4
Sicily	410.8	573.5	796.1	39.6	38.8
Sardinia	213.7	243.3	276.5	13.9	13.6
North-west	806.9	1 017.3	929.2	26.1	– 8.7
North-east	1 040.6	1 171.4	1 022.8	12.6	– 12.7
Centre	536.2	557.3	686.3	3.9	23.1
South	1 411.8	1 638.8	2 195.6	16.1	34.0
Italy	**3 795.6**	**4 384.8**	**4 833.9**	**15.5**	**10.2**
Value in billion EUR(*)	*1.96*	*2.26*	*2.49*		

(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: ***REGIONAL BUDGET FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.***

From the above table it will be noted that, regarding 1996/97, the variations in the north were more or less the same except in Piedmont and Veneto, where there were sharp cutbacks of – 32.4 and – 38.2 % respectively. In central Italy and southern Italy the percentage variations varied considerably: in the centre they ranged from + 176.5 % in Tuscany to – 13.2 % in Lazio. The imbalances in the south were even more marked, ranging from 296.1 % in Apulia to – 12.0 % in Basilicata.

There was also a large increase in Campania in 1996 compared with 1995 (+ 1 048.3 %), attributable both to the previous negative variation in 1994–95

Table 48. Appropriations by region, by main expenditure heading, budget estimates for 1997 (in %)

	Course activities (1)	Training of operators in sector	Other expenditure (2)	Training in health sector	Capital expenditure	Total
Valle d'Aosta	85.4	4.2	1.0	4.5	5.0	100.0
Piedmont	95.2	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.3	100.0
Liguria	97.3	0.4	0.5	1.7	–	100.0
Lombardy	84.9	10.5	0.5	1.3	2.9	100.0
Veneto	99.1	–	0.9	–	–	100.0
Autonomous province of Trento	82.1	7.7	–	–	10.2	100.0
Autonomous province of Bolzano	70.9	–	7.5	18.9	2.7	100.0
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	97.1	0.6	0.3	0.0	2.0	100.0
Emilia-Romagna	90.1	3.3	1.6	3.8	1.2	100.0
Tuscany	87.6	0.8	5.4	3.0	3.2	100.0
Umbria	96.0	0.3	0.1	3.6	–	100.0
Marche	89.4	0.3	0.1	4.0	6.3	100.0
Lazio	79.5	0.2	2.7	16.9	0.8	100.0
Abruzzi	96,0	0.1	3.7	–	0.2	100.0
Molise	80.7	8.4	10.3	0.6	–	100.0
Campania	90.1	2.5	5.2	0.3	2.0	100.0
Apulia	87.4	0.3	12.3	–	–	100.0
Basilicata	81.1	1.8	4.2	1.0	11.9	100.0
Calabria	85.5	2.3	2.5	9.8	–	100.0
Sicily	77.8	20.0	0.1	2.2	–	100.0
Sardinia	75.7	12.6	1.4	10.2	0.1	100.0
North-west	89.4	6.4	0.7	1.5	2.1	100.0
North-east	90.2	2.1	1.8	3.7	2.2	100.0
Centre	85.4	0.4	2.8	9.5	2.0	100.0
South	82.9	9.8	3.1	2.8	1.3	100.0
Italy	**86.0**	**6.2**	**2.3**	**3.7**	**1.7**	**100.0**

(1) Including ESF courses for social welfare practitioners, those working in agriculture and on specific schemes, etc.

(2) Support of trainees, vocational training centres' operating expenditure, equipment, etc.

SOURCE: BUDGET FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

(–37.1 %) and to the inclusion of substantial amounts in the new budget chapters in 1997 (1). This variation was followed by a smaller increase (45.6 %) in 1996/97. In Campania, however, between 1995 and 1997, the trend did not stabilise in the same way as in most other Italian regions.

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(1) Among the chapters concerned were:

- implementation of vocational training projects to combat long-term unemployment and to help young people and people at risk of exclusion from the labour market, find their first jobs (Objective 3, Multi-annual operational programme 1994–99), the total funding (ESF, Regional Fund) being ITL 132.251 billion;
- implementation of vocational training schemes to promote the development and structural adaptation of less developed regions (Objective 1, Multi-annual operational programme 1994–99), the total funding (ESF, Regional Fund) being ITL 54.290 billion;
- implementation of vocational training schemes for workers' adaptation to industrial changes (Objective 4, Multi-annual operational programme 1994–99), amounting to ITL 33.670 billion;
- other chapters related to the health sector, to a total of ITL 26.350 billion.

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In view of the above, the national average variation of 10.2 % is an aggregate for diametrically opposed situations in the north and in the centre/south. The overall reduction in spending estimates amounted to 8.7 % in north-west Italy and 12.7 % in the north-east. On the other hand, there was a 23.1 % rise in central Italy, whereas the increase in southern Italy was even more marked (34.0 %).

A further analysis (see Table 48) is the breakdown of expenditure on vocational training in 1997 by main spending items. The items selected are in the macrosectors designated as 'course activities', 'training of operators in the sector', 'other expenses', 'training in the health sector' and 'capital expenditure'. No distinction could be made between types of training (initial and continuing) in analysing the budgets.

As expected, expenditure on 'course activities' accounted for the highest proportion of spending in every region. Spending on the 'training of operators in the sector' was particularly high in Sicily (20 %), Sardinia (12.6 %) and Lombardy (10.5 %). A sizeable percentage of the budget was earmarked for 'training in the health sector' in the autonomous province of Bolzano (18.9 %), Lazio (16.9 %), Sardinia (10.2 %) and Calabria (9.8 %). Capital expenditure was very high in Basilicata (11.9 %) and the autonomous province of Trento (10.2 %).

Looking at the breakdown by geographical areas, spending on courses was very high in all four areas (from 82.9 % in southern Italy to over 90 % in north-east Italy). Spending on the training of operators was higher in southern Italy (9.8 % and north-west Italy (6.4 %). Expenditure on training in the health sector was very high in central Italy (9.5 %), whereas spending under the heading of 'other expenses' and 'capital expenditure' was more or less the same in all four areas.

4.2.2. Ministry of Labour spending

Certain vocational training measures of national interest are administered directly by the Ministry of Labour through the financial instrument of the European Social Fund's multi-regional operating programmes.

In 1997 the Ministry of Labour set aside a total of ITL 988.66 billion (EUR 510.60 million) for vocational training. This is for schemes designed to improve the management and organisation of the system (through the training of trainers, the reinforcement of the system), for public administration officials (Pass programme), and for young people and adults seeking jobs or whose employment is at risk.

Of this total amount 52.1 % (ITL 515.41 billion) has been devoted to the Multi-regional operational programmes of Objective 1. The 'southern Italy employment emergency' programme has received 41.8 % of the amount earmarked for Objective 1.

Objective 3 of the Multi-regional operational programmes has been allocated ITL 386.39 billion), i.e. 39.1 % of the amount committed. The programme 'measures for training and employment', designed to tackle the problems of initial job integration and the reintegration of people made redundant by the production system, received 67.7 % of the amount.

Finally, Objective 4 of the Multi-regional operational programmes, received ITL 86.84 billion, i.e. the balance of 8.8 % of the amounts allocated, almost all of which (92.4 %) has been assigned to the 'Retraining/requalification' programme.

Table 49. Ministry of Labour expenditure, amounts earmarked and spent, 1997 (in billion ITL)

	Earmarked	*Spent*
	Multi-regional operational programme, Objective 1	
Ministry of Labour	515 417 541 021	225 491 728 817
Other bodies	303 811 322 988	289 149 481 651
Total	**819 228 864 009**	**514 641 210 468**
	Multi-regional operational programme, Objective 3	
Ministry of Labour	386 399 945 817	85 054 913 757
	Multi-regional sub-programmes, Objective 4	
Ministry of Labour	86 848 818 262	26 102 423 064
Total Ministry of Labour spending	**988 666 305 100**	**362 751 488 702**
Value in EUR (*)	*510 603 534*	*187 345 509*

(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: IGFOR FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

As shown by the table, payments amounted to about ITL 362.75 billion (EUR 187.34 million) and, of these, 62.6 % were for activities covered by Objective 1.

Furthermore, as described in Section 3.4.2, within the sphere of continuing training measures covered by Law 236/93, at the end of 1996 the Ministry of Labour made ITL 207 billion available for activities under the separate headings of system-related actions, requalification and retraining of workers in training bodies, and in-company training actions.

4.2.3. Ministry of Education spending

Total spending by the Ministry of Education on schools amounted in 1997 to ITL 58 354.4 billion (EUR 30.13 billion). Of this, ITL 12 259 billion (EUR 6.33 billion), equivalent to 21.0 %, was earmarked for vocational educational streams.

As is shown by the table below, more than half of spending on vocational education (58.4 %) is allocated to technical education. In 1990 this proportion rose as high as 61.2 %, although the total volume of spending was lower than in 1997. At the beginning of the 1990s the amount set aside for vocational institutes was 26.9 %, which rose to 29.1 % in 1997. Art institutes, although having a higher allocation of funds in absolute figures, received a lower percentage of the total funding, which fell from 6 % in 1990 to 4 % in 1997. Teacher training accounted for 5.9 % of expenditure at the beginning of the decade and 7.5 % in the last year taken into account.

Table 50. **Expenditure ( ) on vocational training in schools, amounts earmarked for each heading, current billion ITL, 1990 and 1995–97**

Type	**1990**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
			Year	
Teacher training	520.8	555.2	922.9	925.8
Technical education	5 417.1	5 577.8	7 121.0	7 157.8
Vocational education	2 383.5	2 454.2	3 560.5	3 578.9
Art institutes	532.6	446.2	593.4	596.5
Total (VET) Ministry of Education	**8 854.0**	**9 033.5**	**12 197.9**	**12 259.0**
Value in billion EUR (*)	*4.57*	*4.66*	*6.29*	*6.33*
Spending by local authorities	1 770.8	1 806.7	2 439.5	2 451.8
Total for vocational education in schools	**10 624.8**	**10 840.2**	**14 637.4**	**14 710.8**
Value in billion EUR (*)	*5.48*	*5.59*	*7.55*	*7.59*
Total Ministry of Education	**40 909.6**	**43 688.4**	**58 202.6**	**58 354.4**
Value in billion EUR (*)	*21.12*	*22.56*	*30.05*	*30.13*
Spending on vocational education in schools as % of total Ministry of Education spending	**21.6**	**20.7**	**21.0**	**21.0**

(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

(1) This includes spending on physical education and overheads, distributed in proportion to the number of pupils in each type of education.

SOURCE: *MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BUDGET FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.*

Spending by the Ministry of Education, both on upper secondary schools as a whole and on vocational streams in particular, rose more substantially in 1996, although the percentage set aside for the latter remained more or less unchanged.

Further funding for upper secondary education (and therefore also for vocational streams) comes from communes and provinces, which are required to provide the premises and pay for their maintenance, the cost of heating, lighting and water and non-teaching staff. The proportion of such expenditure can be estimated at about 20 % of the cost borne by the ministry. This meant that in 1997 the amount was ITL 2 451.8 billion (EUR 1.26 billion), which, together with the expenditure by the Ministry of Education, means that a total of ITL 14 710.8 billion (EUR 7.59 billion) was invested in vocational training.

4.2.4. Public administration spending on the continuing vocational training of its employees

In public bodies as a whole, given the need to make the public administration more efficient, the process of upgrading the job skills of employees through training schemes is steadily growing (see also Section 3.4.5).

The following table provides an overall picture of the commitment of the public administration to continuing vocational training, giving figures for the number of training schemes and participants as well as the costs incurred by authorities in providing training services for their own staff.

These figures can be used to estimate the proportion of training expenditure compared with the total wage bill of public administration employees, at least as regards ministerial departments. This can be estimated, very roughly, at 0.3 to 0.1 %.

Table 51. **Training in the public administration, 1996**

Sector	Courses	Participants	Costs (million ITL)	Average cost per course	Average cost per participant (1 000 ITL)	Public administration personnel	Participants as % of all personnel
Ministries	3 440	96 492	49 286	14.3	511		
Public bodies (1)	476	12 396	6 366	13.4	514		
Autonomous agencies (2)	518	16 747	8 921	17.2	533		
Research bodies (3)	633	4 485	1 408	2.2	314		
Total	**5 067**	**130 120**	**65 981**	**13.0**	**507**	**403 754**	**32**
Value EUR (*)			*34.07 million*	*6 714*	*262*		

(1) These include: ACI, CONI, INAIL, INPDAI, INPDAP, INPS (not received) and Ipsema (not received).
(2) These include: AIMA, ANAS, Cassa depositi e prestiti, Corpo nazionale VVFF, State monopolies.
(3) These include: CNR, ENEA, ISPESL, ISTAT, and the State Institute for Health.
(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: FIGURES FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE REPORT, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

Similar data can be derived from the report on training, which refers to regions and autonomous provinces, presented during the first national conference on training in the public sector, held in Rome on 25–26 February 1998. This document estimates that the proportion of the budget available for training in the regions, compared with the total wage bill, is about 0.4 %. It should be pointed out, however, that there are marked differences between local authorities in northern Italy and in central and southern Italy, which evidently lag well behind the rest of the country.

It is relevant, however, that in seven regions this percentage is greater than 0.8 % and in two of them it is higher than 1 %, the target set by the Ministry of the Civil Service's Directive 14/95.

4.2.5. Funding for alternance training

Additional alternance training provided for apprentices, in the very few cases where it exists, is funded out of regional resources and accounted for in regional spending on vocational training.

One component of expenditure to be highlighted is the financial support from the State in the form of relief from the social welfare contributions payable by employers for apprentices and young people recruited under a training/work contract. The consequence of this relief is to lessen the amount of revenue received by the State. The reduction in revenue should be recognised partly as investment in training and partly as an expense attributable to policies supporting integration into the working world.

To calculate the amount by which this relief reduces the revenue going to State coffers is no easy matter. Contribution arrangements differ according to the economic sector in which a company operates, its geographical area, the qualification of its personnel and its size. In addition contributions are always expressed as a percentage of earnings which, in the case of those holding training/work contracts, is equivalent to the remuneration laid down by collective bargaining for a worker at the same grade, whereas for apprentices it is a proportion of that remuneration. This proportion, which rises every six months, is also determined by collective bargaining. At present the minimum entry level is the one laid down for apprentices in the craft trade sector, 58 % of remuneration.

In estimating the amount of loss to State income by reference to 1997, let us consider a hypothetical salary of ITL 1 million (EUR 516.45) per month, per apprenticeship and per holder of a training/work contract.

As far as **apprenticeship** is concerned, employers are essentially exempted from payment of social welfare contributions. These are replaced by a fixed contribution proportionate to the number of weeks worked, which may vary depending on the type of company. The contribution borne by the apprentices is also liable to a lower rate of tax.

In the case of **training/work contracts**, the proportion of the contribution paid by the worker is as laid down for ordinary workers, whereas the proportion payable by the employer differs depending on the area, the type of undertaking and the economic sector.

Overall, the State's indirect financial contributions for apprenticeships and training/work contracts in 1997 amounted to ITL 3 706 billion (EUR 1 914 million).

In fact, the amount 'invested' by the State is lower, since employers can deduct the amount they pay out in contributions from their taxable income. Based on the average rates of tax, it may be estimated that the actual amount not received by the State, as a result of the efforts to encourage apprenticeship and training/work contracts for 1997, was approximately ITL 2 270 billion (EUR 1 172 million).

In addition to these benefits in the form of reduced contributions granted by the State, there are other benefits granted by the regions. There are many regional regulations offering incentives to employers to take on apprentices, to stabilise their occupational status and to reimburse the cost to the employer of training. For example, the region of Liguria makes a contribution of up to ITL 3 million to employers taking on young people under apprenticeship or training/work contracts and for putting on training schemes jointly agreed by the social partners.

4.2.6. A summary of public spending on vocational training

What has been described up to this point provides a picture of the overall structure of public spending on vocational training in Italy.

The following is a summary table, referring to 1997, of the various contributions which go towards total budgeted public expenditure for vocational training.

Table 52. Summary of public spending budgeted for vocational training, 1997 (in billion ITL)

Administrative authority		**Amount**
Regions (1)		4 833.9
Ministry of Education		12 259.0
Local bodies for vocational training in the school		2 451.8
Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research (2)		547.5
Ministry of Labour		569.7
Multi-regional operational programme schemes	*362.7*	
Schemes pursuant to Law 236/93 (3)	*207.0*	
Public administration for training of own personnel (4)		65.9
Total		**20 727.8**
Value in billion EUR (*)		*10.7*

(1) Budget estimate figure.
(2) Estimated.
(3) Expenditure commitments.
(4) 1996.
(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: FIGURES FROM THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

Table 52 shows that 59.1 % of total expenditure is attributable to the Ministry of Education which, as already pointed out, has earmarked ITL 12 259 billion for vocational streams in upper secondary education. Regional funds accounted for 23.3 % of the total, which is allocated to the various types of vocational training courses. The communes, provinces and regions provide ITL 2 451.8 billion (a further 11.8 % of total expenditure) to vocational training in the school, in addition to the amount earmarked by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Labour allocates a total of ITL 569.7 billion, of which ITL 362.7 billion is for Multi-regional operational programmes and ITL 207 billion is for activities associated with Law 236/93. The Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research has earmarked — according to ISFOL estimates — ITL 547.5 billion for university diploma courses, in other words the vocational stream within the sphere of university education. Lastly, the public administration assigns ITL 65.9 billion to the continuing vocational training of its employees.

4.3. The contribution of European Community funds

A point that needs to be made relates to the 'dependence' of the Italian training system on Community funding. This dependence has been brought about not just by institutional needs or training policy options, but mainly for technical and financial reasons. Since public sector regional resources are to a great extent used as the 'counterpart' in joint financing, training conducted with the contribution of the European Social Fund does not supplement the training funded out of regional resources, but ultimately becomes almost identified with it. Furthermore, co-financing is granted subject to compliance with clearcut planning and procedural constraints, the meeting of specific requirements and compliance with the structuring of resources according to objectives, main strands and Community measures, so it is evident that regional training is 'conditioned' by the European Social Fund throughout the system, its processes and its products.

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It is also true that the formulation of Community operational programmes and fund strategies are specified with the support and participation of all Member States. In practice, however, the regions (and in Italy these are responsible for vocational training) have been forced to make radical changes in the planning of their activities and in their decision-making procedures, in response to pressures, admittedly approved and participated in at national level, but nevertheless external to the regions themselves. The constraints arising from financial dependence are not confined to the need to keep to a pre-set expenditure ceiling. They include the obligation to meet deadlines and satisfy the procedures for the granting of funds, with inevitable effects on planning periods and procedures.

On the other hand, the motivation for the regions' wide-scale recourse to ESF funding is not just the financial consideration. There is a certain 'convergence' of the training policy objectives formulated by the regions and, through them, by Italy in general, and the objectives of the European Social Fund. Both view training as an instrument of active labour policy that can promote entry and re-entry to, and continuation on, the labour market, and link the planning of training activities with the requirements on both the demand and the supply side of labour in the various local contexts.

In order to build up a comprehensive national picture of the Italian training system, it may be of help to look at the figures for joint financing, together with those for training activities funded exclusively out of the regions' own funds (mainly devoted to the basic training of young people emerging from compulsory education). This analysis shows that in 1996 measures jointly financed by the European Social Fund in fact 'covered' over 77 % of all national investment in training. The European Social Fund therefore has a considerable impact on the whole Italian vocational training system, in terms of both the planning and management of financial resources and of the overall structure of training goals, types of action and categories of user groups.

Table 53. **Jointly and non-jointly financed activities, costs and dependence index, 1996 (in million ITL)**

Region	**ESF earmarked**	**Non-ESF earmarked**	**ESF + non-ESF**	**Dependence index (ESF as % of total)**
Valle d'Aosta OP	8 293	966	9 259	89.6
Piedmont OP	263 157	35 111	298 268	88.2
Liguria OP	281 146	200 000	481 146	58.4
Lombardy OP	42 501	49 583	92 085	46.2
Veneto OP	33 276	80 000	113 276	29.4
Province of Trento OP	44 765	24 748	69 513	64.4
Province of Bolzano OP	122 001	72 452	194 453	62.7
Friuli-Venezia Giulia OP	93 634	744	94 378	99.2
Emilia-Romagna OP	307 170	22 874	330 045	93.1
Tuscany OP	172 939	2 111	175 050	98.8
Umbria OP	62 304	358	62 662	99.4
Marche OP	56 474	4 870	61 344	92.1
Lazio OP	242 129	45 450	287 579	84.2
Total centre — north	**1 729 788**	**539 267**	**2 269 056**	**76.0**
Value in EUR (1 000) (*)	*893 361*	*278 508*	*1 171 870*	
Abruzzi OP	49 506	2 285	51 791	95.6
Basilicata OP	130 746	0	130 746	100.0
Calabria OP	159 181	0	159 181	100.0
Campania OP	169 941	397	170 338	99.8
Molise OP	37 290	0	37 290	100.0
Apulia OP	48 196	0	48 196	100.0
Sicily OP	74 745	0	74 745	100.0
Sardinia OP	239 971	401 176	641 147	37.4
Total south	**909 576**	**403 858**	**1 313 435**	**69.0**
Value in EUR (1 000) (*)	*469 757*	*208 575*	*678 333*	
Total for Italy (excluding MOPs)	**2 639 363**	**943 125**	**3 582 491**	**74.0**
Value in EUR (1 000) (*)	*1 363 117*	*487 083*	*1 850 202*	
Total MOP	**575 689**	**0**	**0**	**0.0**
*Value in EUR (1 000)**	*(297 319)*			
Total	**3 215 053**	**943 125**	**4 158 177**	**77.0**
*Value in EUR (1 000)**	*1 660 436*	*487 083*	*2 147 519*	

(1) The data for the non-ESF commitment by the autonomous province of Bolzano have been estimated.

(2) The figure for the ESF commitment is over-estimated in that it does not allow for withdrawals from commitments.

(3) The regions of Basilicata, Calabria, Molise, Apulia and Sardinia fund no activities other than those jointly financed with the European Social Fund.

(4) The total volume of resources earmarked for training differs from the amount stated in the table in regional spending, because these are amounts earmarked, not budgeted figures.

(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: IGFOR/SIRGS AND REGIONAL FIGURES, PROCESSED BY ISFOL.

4.4. Expenditure by employers

Companies also engage in vocational training activities, almost exclusively drawing on their own internal funds. Information on this aspect of training expenditure, however, is less detailed than for other types.

In 1994, ISTAT and ISFOL conducted a survey on companies with a workforce of at least 10 people. This survey did not cover firms in the sectors of agriculture, health, education and non-saleable services.

According to the findings, the undertakings invested ITL 624.6 billion in training in 1993. In addition, bearing in mind the cost of the labour of the employees involved in courses, the instructors and overheads, this contribution amounts to ITL 2 346 billion. At the same time, employers received subsidies for their training activity amounting to ITL 81.8 billion, so that the actual expenditure incurred by companies on the training of their own employees was ITL 542.8 billion.

Of the total investment without labour costs, 69.5 % was made by companies with over 1 000 employees, the average contribution per worker being ITL 217 975. Employers with a workforce of fewer than 100 allocated ITL 30.6 billion (5.6 % of total investments) to training, an average of ITL 110 240 per worker.

Table 54. **Total expenditure by companies on training their own employees, by type of cost 1993 (in billion ITL and %)**

Type	**Absolute figures**	**% breakdown**
Direct costs	624.6	26.6
in billion EUR (*)	*0.32*	
Indirect costs		
Cost of trainees' work	1 356.0	57.8
Cost of internal trainers' work	255.6	10.9
Other overheads	110.0	4.7
Total gross cost	**2 346.2**	100.0
in billion EUR (*)	*1.21*	
Subsidies	– 81.8	
Total net costs	**2 264.4**	
in billion EUR (*)	*1.16*	

(*) EUR 1 = ITL 1 936.27.

SOURCE: ISTAT, LA FORMAZIONE NELLE IMPRESE, 1996.

4.5. Individual expenditure

As already pointed out, attendance at public sector elementary and lower secondary schools is free of charge.

All upper secondary schools, on the other hand, require a contribution from families, although the amount involved is very low, about ITL 100 000 (EUR 52) per year. This includes government enrolment tax and school fees (the latter are laid down by the school council of each school). To support the 'right to study', however, there are various forms of income support for financially needy and deserving students. These are mainly study grants, which consist of exemption from the taxes and a financial contribution towards the purchase of textbooks, normally the responsibility of the student.

Attendance at the regional initial training courses provided in public or subsidy-funded bodies, is usually free of charge but, depending on the type of course and the region, they may require an enrolment fee, ranging from ITL 50 000 (EUR 26) for post-compulsory schooling day courses to ITL 300 000 (EUR 156) for post-diploma specialist courses. In addition to this enrolment fee a financial contribution may be requested by the training provider towards the purchase of teaching material.

Nevertheless, there is no single national framework of regulations, since each region is autonomous in deciding on rules of access, attendance and the financial contribution to be made by the users of its courses. The situation therefore differs from one area of the country to another.

In general, there are no special direct financial incentives for workers in employment to attend continuing vocational training courses. Furthermore, these courses are usually on a paid basis. In some cases, however, when they are provided by public sector training bodies (or by bodies operating under a convention), they may be completely free of charge, as may be the teaching materials. In a very few cases, financial assistance may be provided for travel costs. There is also a contractual measure that allows workers to make use of individual leave to attend training activities.

The case of unemployed workers differs. Their access to training courses is absolutely free and in some cases they may also receive an attendance allowance (ranging from ITL 2 000 to ITL 5 000 per hour), particularly for ESF-supported courses. For example, an allowance is available for unemployed workers attending training schemes (of over 400 hours) in the southern regions that meet ESF Objective 1, strand 7 (development and structural adaptation of less developed regions) requirements. In other regions, such as Lombardy, similar opportunities are provided for the unemployed attending courses funded under Objective 3.

At university level the contribution payable by students was very small up to the early 1990s. Half way through the decade a new regulation came into force which has simplified the contribution procedures, identifying them as just two items: the enrolment fee defined by law at national level (ITL 300 000) and the university contributions, which are established independently by individual universities based on academic requirements and economic conditions, payable by each student. A reform of the regulations (Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers, 30.4.1997) established that, with effect from the 1997/98 academic year, the contribution required by universities from students may not exceed 20 % of the normal State transfer for funding.

In the 1996/97 academic year, the average university fee at national level was just over ITL 900 000 (EUR 468). There are, however, significant differences between universities in northern Italy, which tend to be more expensive, and those in central and southern Italy which are less expensive, although the gap is narrower than in the past.

The reform of the regulations also altered the procedures for financial support to students ('Uniformity of treatment regarding the right to university studies'), raising the amount of study grants and redefining the financial contribution to be borne by regions. Also in 1997, for the first time the national supplementary fund for the right to study was distributed, in the form of student loans and study grants. This brought a considerable increase in the number of students benefiting.

Responsibilities as regards the right to study are broken down as follows. The State is responsible for the coordination, planning and the distribution among the regions of the supplementary fund. The regions are responsible for the funding of accommodation, catering and transport, information and guidance, health support and the administration of student loans (contributions to meet the financial needs associated with attendance at courses, which students are required to repay after completing their studies but not before they embark upon their careers). The universities have the task of organising their teaching, guidance and tutoring services in such a way as to make the right to study effective.

The regulations also provide for indirect support for families, albeit small, in the form of dependent children allowances and tax deductions. At present, 22.0 % of the total cost of education can be deducted.

According to OECD figures for 1995, the percentage of total spending for tertiary education establishments that is paid by Italian families (including public subsidies paid to the families) is one of the lowest in Europe: 16 %, compared with 28 %, for example, in the United Kingdom, 30 % in Ireland and 16 % in France.

4.6. International comparisons

Annual public spending on education appears to be lower than in the other OECD countries. In 1995, the latest year for which comparable data are available, total spending, including subsidies to the private sector, amounted to 4.7 % of the GDP, about one percentage point below the OECD average of 5.9 %. Considerably below the average (12.6 %) is educational expenditure as a percentage of total public spending: 9.0 % in Italy, compared with 13.5 % in Ireland, 13.1 % in Denmark, 12.8 % in Spain, 11.1 % in France and 9.5 % in Germany.

On the other hand, expenditure on staff remuneration as a percentage of current expenditure, i.e. 89 % for primary and secondary education, is one of the highest in all OECD countries, easily exceeding the average (82.0 %). More specifically, spending on teaching staff only compared with total operating costs is 71.0 %. The only countries where the proportion is lower are Ireland and Belgium, whereas the OECD average is 69.0 %. On the other hand, spending on teaching staff as a proportion of current expenditure in tertiary education is more or less the average (72 %).

Analysing expenditure per pupil, Italy comes half way down the international scale. Its average per capita spending is EUR 4 728 (the OECD average is EUR 4 324). Expenditure per pupil compared with per capita GDP is entirely in line with the OECD average.

The breakdown of annual spending per pupil at the various levels of education is one of the most uniform in OECD countries. The differentials by level of education are smaller than in most other OECD countries, where expenditure per pupil rises considerably the higher the educational level. Compared with per capita GDP, therefore, Italy spends more than the OECD average on pre-school, primary and secondary pupils, and less for students in tertiary education.

Chapter 5
Qualitative aspects

5.1. Certification and qualifications

5.1.1. Two certification systems

The Italian school education and training certification systems come within two altogether separate spheres of responsibility: the school education system comes under the Ministry of Education, and the non-school system comes under the Ministry of Labour and the regions.

Since schools also deliver certificates with vocational value, school diplomas will also be taken into account here.

5.1.2. Certification in the school and university system

The school system

Technical and vocational institutes, art institutes and teacher training schools are all part of upper secondary education, which is administered by the Ministry of Education.

On a par with the other streams in upper secondary education, the technical and vocational streams conclude, after a five-year course, with a State examination that leads to the *'maturità'*, i.e. certificate of completion of upper secondary education.

During the 1998/99 school year, new provisions covering the conduct of *maturità* examinations, introduced by Law 425/97, came into force.

The State examination consists of three written tests and an oral. The first written test ascertains language skills; the second covers one of the main subjects in the course of study; the third is multidisciplinary and covers subjects studied in the final year, being structured so that it also assesses the pupil's knowledge of a foreign language. The oral is on subjects of multidisciplinary concern.

Among the innovations introduced by the new regulations, is the 'school credit' *(credito scolastico)* assigned by the class council (for internal candidates) in its final assessment of each of the three years of school or by the examination board (in the case of external candidates). This takes into account the training credits accumulated over the previous school years. For external candidates, admission to the examination is subject to having passed a preliminary examination.

The *'diploma di maturità'* opens the doors to all university faculties. It also enables a person to enter the working world or to enrol in a Level 2 course in the vocational training system administered by the regions.

State vocational institutes and art institutes also prepare young people for an intermediate State examination that entitles them to a certificate of qualification *(attestato di qualifica)* at the end of the first three years.

The certificate of vocational qualification provides access to lower and higher level careers in the civil service. It also enables the holder to start work in related occupations for which vocational qualifications are required, in accordance with collective labour agreements in the private sector, which provide for a maximum three-month trial period.

Teacher training schools, following a three-year course of studies, deliver a diploma for nursery school teachers *(maestra d'asilo).*

The diplomas of education discussed above are recognised at national level. As regards the *diploma di maturità,* Community Directive 92/51, which regulates intermediate certificates of education, recognises the validity of some of them in the rest of the Community.

Possession of certain technical secondary education diplomas, which are taken at technical institutes, qualifies the holder to have a trial work placement period and to sit the State examination for enrolment in vocational colleges and also, if that examination is passed, to engage in an independent occupation.

The university diploma

University diploma courses are set up within university faculties. They include examinations in individual subjects and a final diploma examination. On obtaining a university diploma, the holder can engage in relevant professions in the private sector and, since a short time ago, in the public sector as well. As things now stand, the reference regulations are set out solely in Law 127 of 15 May 1997.

5.1.3. Certification in the vocational training system

The certification system is currently being redefined on the basis of Law 196/97 (see Section 6.3.5 below) to allow for the development of a system of training credits and recognition of skills acquired in vocational training.

When this happens it will, in practice, be possible to certify vocational skills through the recognition of work-related training credits that count towards a certificate of studies or enrolment in a school course, based on ad hoc agreements between the ministries concerned (Labour, Education, Universities).

People attending courses directly administered by the regions, organised by other training centres under conventions or by delegation, are issued with a certificate of attendance on completion of those courses. The certificate states the nature of the course, its theoretical and practical content, its duration and any new vocational abilities acquired or the marks obtained, as well as a final assessment.

Final tests to obtain the vocational qualification certificate *(qualifica)* are held before an examining board whose members are as laid down by regional law. They must include experts designated by the local offices of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, as well as by unions and employers' associations. The examinations are the culmination of a training route incorporating experience that must be approved by the regional vocational training departments *(assessorati alla formazione professionale).* Certain regions have set up their own certification committees, whose task it is to ensure that the examinations comply with the vocational standards set out in collective agreements or demanded by the labour market in the region concerned, in order to ensure that the supply meets the local demand for labour.

The regions issue a qualification certificate *(qualifica)* to those considered as having successfully taken the courses. On the basis of this, the District Sections for Employment *(sezioni circoscrizionali per l'impiego)* issue a certificate enabling a person to enter working life with a specific job profile. This certificate is also a valid title allowing its holder to sit public competitive examinations for specific occupations.

Generally a distinction is made between the qualifications for vocational training at Levels 1, 2 and 3. Level 1 qualification is for vocational training to which access is gained after completing compulsory education. Level 2 qualification can be obtained after completing the whole cycle of upper secondary education. Level 3 qualification can be obtained only after a post-graduate training course.

Apprenticeship

As far as apprentices are concerned, the 1955 Law stated that the training process would be conducted through on-the-job learning and a number of hours' extra instruction, regulated by collective bargaining. This training would lead to an examination and the acquisition of a certificate of qualification. However, only rarely were the courses in fact conducted and, at the end of the period of apprenticeship, the employer entered the qualification acquired into the worker's registration book.

The new regulations, which have come into force, are based on Law 196/97, which states that the training commitment should average at least 120 hours' training per year, conducted either at or outside the workplace.

Duly certified training outside the workplace has the value of a training credit within the integrated training system (school and vocational training), and is entered in the worker's curriculum vitae. If the apprenticeship is suspended before its normal term, the knowledge acquired may be certified in the form of training credits.

Figure 17 **Certification issued in Italy and its European Community classification: table of equivalence**

Level of training	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Basic or level 1 vocational training qualification	○				
Three-year vocational qualification (*)		○			
Diploma of completion of upper secondary, technical or vocational education			○		
Post-diploma or level 2 vocational training qualification				○	
University diploma					○
University degree					○
Post-graduate or level 3 vocational training qualification					○

(*) Can be taken in vocational institutes, art institutes and teacher training schools.

If persons who have already undergone such training are taken on by another employer as apprentices in the same occupation, they are exempted from attending the training modules they have already completed. The vocational skills acquired in the workplace are certified by the employer, who notifies the local public body responsible for employment services that the training objective has been achieved. Certification of the skills acquired by training outside the workplace is regulated by individual regions as laid down by the regulations referred to above.

5.2. The training of trainers

5.2.1. Teachers and trainers in the education and vocational training systems

Teachers and trainers belong to two different systems: education and vocational training. The methods of their recruitment differ, as do their career prospects and contractual status.

Teachers in technical and vocational institutes are civil servants (Ministry of Education). They are entered in an official list of teachers on taking a public competitive examination if they have a specific degree in teaching. Only in the case of 'technical and practical' *(tecnico-pratici)* teachers, is a *'diploma di maturità'* sufficient. The former group teaches subjects of a general educational nature on the theoretical level, while the latter operate on the practical level in the workshop and laboratory.

Registration in the list of teachers confers permanent teaching status. Supervision, both administrative and professional, is exercised by the head of the individual school to which the teacher is assigned. These spheres of responsibility are laid down by national regulations and collective labour agreements.

There are a total of 203 000 teachers in technical and vocational education, two thirds of whom work in technical institutes and one third in vocational institutes. 'Technical and practical' teachers account for barely 13 % of the total.

Regional vocational training trainers are employed by, or work with, local bodies (region, province or commune) or private bodies operating under a convention. There are neither formal channels for access nor any official status, since no job profiles for trainers have as yet been established at national level. Recruitment is by interview and selection. In every region, however, there is a 'regional register of trainers operating in vocational training'. As regards their level of education, trainers have a diploma (approximately 60 %) or a degree (26 %) and on average their age ranges from 30 to 40. The total number of such trainers is 19 300 (ISFOL figures) and they work mainly in level 1 training courses. The collective agreement applicable to trainers in the public system states that their working week is 36 hours, of which 18 to 22 hours are spent on teaching and 14 to 18 hours on complementary activities. The collective agreement for this group identifies a unique role for trainers, structured as four vocational functions responding to the flexibility requirements of the vocational training system. The functions defined are: sector coordinator, project coordinator, analyst/provider of guidance and trainer for the integration of the disabled.

The new labour contract (1994–97) introduced new job functions in addition to those already in existence, to guarantee that training is of the highest possible quality. These are evaluator of training processes (measuring the quality of provision in terms of efficiency and effectiveness) and IT network management technician (design and management of computerised information systems).

5.2.2. The profile of teachers and trainers: normative and professional aspects

Teachers in upper secondary schools are State employees and the regulations governing their profession are laid down by the laws on schooling and by a collective labour agreement. For access to permanent teaching status, national competitive examinations are held periodically. To sit them, candidates must have the type of degree required for the area of teaching chosen (or a diploma in the case of 'technical and practical' teachers), but no specific teaching skills are required. The examination (both a written test and an oral) determines knowledge of the specific discipline to be taught, but not whether the candidate has abilities in human relations and teaching skills.

After the competitive examination has been passed, there is a preliminary 'training year'. The teacher is monitored by a tutor and, apart from his or her normal duties, must attend an initial training course organised by the provincial offices of the Ministry of Education. Once the training year has been completed, depending on the activities performed and the tutor's report, the teacher may be taken onto the permanent teaching staff.

Only recently did Law 341/90 provide for a specialist two-year post-graduate course for teachers in upper secondary education, designed to impart teaching skills suitable for permanent teaching status. In the national collective agreement that has been in force since September 1995, substantial changes have been introduced into the financial and professional process. The in-service training received by individual teachers has become a variable that contributes towards an increase in earnings. There are seven earnings groups of variable duration. During a period in any one group, a teacher must have a minimum of 100 hours' training before he or she can go on to the next.

Law 845/78 gives the regions responsibility for training regional trainers. This practitioner does not, however, have a specific initial training path and the skills required for access to permanent status are not, in the absence of clear-cut regulations specifying the necessary professional requirements at national level, clearly defined. The efforts of individual regions have created widely varying situations. The current contract calls solely for possession of a diploma of upper secondary education.

5.3. Vocational guidance

5.3.1. The legislative framework

The overall framework for the assignment of responsibilities for guidance consists of two basic, separate and parallel streams:

- educational guidance, regulated by Presidential Decree 416/74, establishing that it is to be managed by the Ministry of Education and school districts, supplemented by subsequent laws, orders and ministerial circulars, including the Directive on the *Guidance of students* (Ministry of Education, 1997) and Ministerial Circular 488/97 on *School, university and vocational guidance* (Ministry of Universities, 1997);

- vocational guidance for which the reference legislative texts are Presidential Decree 616/77 and Law 845/78, which designated the Ministry of Labour and the regions as the bodies responsible for guidance. These have been supplemented by Law 196/97.

Despite the collaboration between the regions and school districts on the conduct of guidance (Law 845/78) and the establishment of district sections for employment and agencies for employment (Law 56/87), institutional responsibilities for guidance remain with the regions and with the schools and there is no systematic coordination with the labour market.

The absence of an outline law on this subject has hampered local activity, which is very uneven in the country in terms of both distribution and effectiveness. It has also virtually prevented the activation of a national system, despite the Protocol Agreement of 1989, signed by the Ministry of Labour, the regions and the national associations of communes and provinces, on the creation of an integrated network of guidance services, to be achieved with the support of the Ministry of Education.

This situation shows that institutional coordination between placement and guidance, and training and career consultancy is relatively fragile. The steps now being taken to reinforce that link consist of the signing of local level conventions between the regions (which are responsible for training and guidance), offices of the Ministry of Labour, the Agencies for Employment and possibly local offices of the Ministry of Education, on the provision of integrated services for employment.

5.3.2. The existing structures

School guidance in the compulsory education cycle is provided by the school itself within individual disciplines. The choice has been in fact to adopt the path of close integration of guidance in the curriculum. In upper secondary education over the past nine years a new practitioner has emerged: the coordinator of school guidance services, whose duties are to plan guidance activities.

The local offices of the Ministry of Education responsible for the subject of guidance are the school districts *(distretti scolastici)*, which have institutionally been assigned responsibility for the provision of advice and information to pupils and their families on educational options.

University guidance is provided by special centres set up in universities. Their function is to inform students on the organisation and workings of the university and on job and post-graduate training opportunities. Another task is to link up with upper secondary schools on schemes for the presentation of the various faculties and degree courses, as well as with other institutions for the planning of specific initiatives.

Vocational guidance services are the responsibility of the regions. Most of these concentrate on the tasks of promoting, planning and conducting guidance. There are two types of service: guidance centres and information points, supported by the Agencies for Employment and by labour market observation centres.

At local level these services are provided side by side with others of a public or private nature:

- young people information centres and local initiative centres for employment *(Centri di iniziativa locale per l'occupazione — CILO)* generally promoted by the communes;
- provincial offices for labour and full employment (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare), district sections for employment (local sections of the Ministry of Labour, which have replaced the previous placement offices); and
- centres for the provision of information to associations in the private social welfare sector, which are religious or union based.

5.3.3. The outlook

A further boost to school and university guidance is expected from Directive 487, issued by the Ministry of Education, and Ministerial Circular 488 issued by the Ministry of the Universities and Scientific and Technological Research.

In practical terms, the following are planned:

- initial and in-service training of teachers in schools of all kinds and at every level on guidance matters;
- the gathering and distribution of information for families and students to make them aware of the various options in upper secondary education;
- preparation for the choice of a university or non-university post-diploma training path, directed at students in the penultimate year of upper secondary school;
- preparation for enrolment in degree courses, university diploma courses or post-diploma training in the final year of upper secondary schools in order to monitor the options chosen by students through targeted guidance work.

Regarding vocational guidance, there are plans to reinforce further the district sections for employment *(sezioni circoscrizionali per l'impiego)*, identifying them as the main local points of reference for analyses of the local labour market, and for support in satisfying the demand and supply of labour, as well as in distributing information to institutional and economic bodies at local level. As the local agencies of the Ministry of Labour, they have replaced the previous placement offices and make up a network of bodies distributed throughout the country. Introduced as the result of the need to set aside the traditional bureaucratic and administrative approach adopted by the placement offices, the district sections for employment are responsible for:

- providing information on the local labour market;
- gathering information on the pool of labour in the catchment area;
- promoting the matching of demand and supply by providing information on active policies for labour and vocational training.

5.3.4. Some innovative experiments

When discussing the range of guidance services operating in Italy, particular mention should be made of the *Rete Informagiovani*, a youth information network of about 300 centres — networked at municipality and provincial level — throughout the country. These consist of *Punti Informagiovani di Autoconsultazione* (self-service information points), *Centri Informagiovani* (youth information centres), services, centres and agencies. They provide information on the local production system, job profiles and the training routes to the labour market as well as specific features of that market due to the local context and current changes. Another area of information and guidance is in the use of leisure and the enjoyment of tourist, sports or cultural facilities. These services are fairly evenly distributed throughout the country, their aim being to give young people guidance in their choices, or at least to offer to those who seek it an access route to the working world, information and guidance as to the options and facilities provided by the legislator to that end. Designed to respond to direct requests from users, these centres organise information and produce analyses and research, in an effort to provide an ever more detailed understanding of the local production context.

Other innovative bodies are the *Retravailler* or CORA *(Centro Orientamento Retravailler Associati)* centres. The aim of these centres is to support adult women aged between 25 and 55 who would like to enter or re-enter the labour market at a time when, despite the growing supply of female labour, the demand is becoming increasingly selective. The centres operate by supporting and organising guidance courses and advisory sessions. First set up in Milan, the *Retravailler* centres have also been introduced over the last few years in Bologna and Reggio Emilia, organised by the provincial administration, in Florence, where they have been set up by the commune and the province, and in Verona and Rome where the vocational guidance associations of Veneto and Lazio respectively have taken the lead.

Additional innovations in the range of guidance services operating in Italy are the regional networks for guidance and the *Orientanet*.

The regional networks for guidance include web sites on vocational guidance and employment, created by the regional and provincial departments for schools, training and labour policies and the employment agencies that have been operating in certain regions (Piedmont, Lombardy, Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna and Lazio) for some time. These are about to be extended and will soon cover the whole of the country.

In their respective locations, the City of Turin, the region of Lombardy, the province of Milan, *StradaNove, Ciop* in the province of Bologna, the region of Tuscany and *Sirio* offer information on training courses planned (listed by vocational area, level, potential users and providers), active labour policy initiatives, documentation and current regulations on employment and work, cultural exchange schemes, Community programmes for the promotion of employment, and the socioeconomic features of the reference provinces and regions.

Orientanet is a web site devoted to the provision of guidance on university studies and higher education. Created in cooperation with the *Campus* project of the Conference of Rectors of Italian Universities, it is hoped that the site will serve as a guide to post-diploma training courses, whether or not at university level, as well as the range of company activities conducted in coordination with teaching activities (*stages*, work placements) and career options. One of the declared objectives of this new service is to activate cooperation among the various parties operating throughout the country by creating and distributing effective information and training instruments in the field of educational and vocational guidance.

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Chapter 6
Trends, perspectives and innovation

6.1. General strategy

Outline Law 845/78 included vocational training among the instruments for active labour policy with a view to training, retraining, and providing specialist and refresher training for, and improving the skills of, workers as part of permanent training. In fact, the Italian training system had, for a long time, concentrated on level 1 training, the aim being to provide remedial training for a disadvantaged group who had dropped out of the school system with no qualifications. It was not until the 1980s that the system started to be opened up to other user groups.

After the introduction of training/work contracts, the preference demonstrated by the employers for this instrument launched an encounter between the social partners on the role of training.

From the early 1990s, boosted by the new demands being expressed by the working world and the strategies emerging at Community level, as summarised in the White Paper on education and training, a broad-ranging debate began in Italy on the modernisation and reorganisation of the whole vocational training system.

The social partners must be acknowledged as having been the first to exert pressure for a proper debate on a system mainly directed towards basic training, at a time when commitment to other streams such as higher vocational training, alternance training and continuing vocational training seemed weak.

In the protocol of understanding of January 1993 between Confindustria and CGIL, CISL and UIL (⁸), the social partners put forward proposals for a comprehensive reform of the system, identifying five strategic objectives for its modernisation:

(1) linking production requirements and training;
(2) a detailed review of the needs;
(3) developing initiatives for workers already in the working world;
(4) launching an alternance training system and mixed training/employment contracts;
(5) adding to the schemes directed at disadvantaged groups and workers on the 'job mobility register' (⁹), and schemes associated with positive action.

These strategic objectives of the bilateral protocol are set out in far greater detail in the subsequent agreement on incomes and employment policy of July 1993.

In the first place, the agreement stresses the need to clarify the confused institutional picture, with all its fragmentation and with little coordination among the institutions concerned, i.e. the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education and the regions. With this in mind, there are now plans to set up a standing committee of which the social partners are also members. Its terms of reference would be to link the three main strands of the Italian education and training system: school, university and vocational training. The identified need, therefore, was to clarify the functions of the State and regions when it comes to vocational training. This need was met in Legislative Decree 112/98.

(⁸) See Annex 1.
(⁹) See Annex 3.

Secondly, the agreement highlights the need to redirect the vocational training system towards a demand that has not yet been satisfied, by developing higher level, alternance and continuing vocational training.

In particular, it is hoped to develop a post-qualification, post-diploma and post-degree provision of training. The criteria for the reform of mixed employment contracts (apprenticeship and training/work contracts) have been defined with the aim of improving theoretical training. Mention is made of the launching of a continuing vocational training system, financed out of the resources derived from the employers' contribution of 0.3 % of their wage bills.

With regard to basic training, this will be reformulated in the light of the raising of the minimum school leaving age, whereas the reform of upper secondary education should be planned as part of an integrated school and vocational training system.

The subsequent labour agreement of September 1996, signed by the government and the social partners, substantially confirmed the planning objectives of the 1993 agreement and adopted a systematic approach. There was a formal request for Law 845/78 to be replaced and for a new institutional framework to be outlined, based on the integrated training system.

To that end, the basic objectives were stated as:

- raising the minimum school-leaving age to 16;
- a right to education and training up to the age of 18;
- pursuance of 'integration' between education, training and work through the adoption of a modular structure of pathways and a system of training credits and certification;
- the structuring of an independent higher-level training system, which does not follow on continuously after the secondary school;
- greater stress on training activities within apprenticeship and training/work contracts;
- an extension of the number of work placements; and
- the development of continuing vocational training.

Lastly, in December 1998, the 'social pact for development and employment' was signed. This pact between the government and the social partners attributes a strategic value to training.

In particular it covers the following measures:

- introduction of compulsory training (at school, in vocational training centres, in apprenticeship) up to the age of 18;
- reinforcement of apprenticeship (in particular the external training element) and work placements;
- development of the new integrated channel of technical and vocational education and training;
- reinforcement of continuing vocational training, in part through a reduction in working hours.

Finally, in January 1999, compulsory education was increased in length to nine years, until 15 years of age, as part of a wider reform process which in May 1999 raised compulsory education and training to 18 years of age on the basis of criteria set out in more detail in

Section 6.2. It can therefore be said that the general strategy for reform of the training and education system, outlined in the labour agreement in the first instance and later in the social pact, has already been translated into a series of normative measures, while other planning objectives are awaiting implementing regulations.

It should, however, be emphasised that consultation between the government and the social partners has been a priority in the reform of the system of vocational education and training. The 'participatory' model is confirmed as a strategic instrument in defining the reform objectives, not only for education and training but also for work and employment in general.

6.2. Existing normative measures

In the process of the reform of the Italian vocational training system, 1993 was the year in which the debate came to a head and set out strategy in planning agreements, such as the protocol of understanding and the labour agreement mentioned in the previous section, as well as launching the legislative reform process.

The first regulations on the subject of continuing training, placements and surveys of training needs conducted by bilateral bodies were laid down by Law 236/93. Later Law 451/94 launched the review of training/work contracts. In 1995 the National Committee for Vocational Training, consisting of representatives of the ministries, regional authorities and social partners, was established within the Ministry of Labour.

The proposals formulated by the Committee were the inspiration for the labour pact of September 1996 and then Law 196 of 24 June 1997, 'Regulations on the promotion of employment'. The renovation and modernisation of the vocational training system, therefore, was embodied in a preliminary set of regulations which set out the guidelines for the reform, requiring subsequent regulatory instruments for the detailed decisions on individual points. Together with the decree on the reform of school cycles and the proposals for university education, a broad-ranging measure was outlined that would redefine the whole training system.

Law 196 of 24 June 1997 is a complex piece of legislation that contains measures making the labour market more flexible — in particular, it permits the introduction of temporary employment, in line with the system in other countries — together with many measures relating to vocational training. In addition to the regulations covering the training of temporary workers (Article 5) and young people engaged on work of public value, as well as the experiments in 'work grants' *(borse-lavoro)* (Article 26), Articles 16, 17 and 18 set out broader reform measures.

Articles 16 and 18 are directed at reforming the role of alternance training within the Italian training system, based on consensus guidance from the government and the social partners. In particular, Article 16 sets out major changes to the regulations on apprenticeship, designed to relaunch this arrangement as a preferential channel of training, which should no longer be used merely for remedial training of young people dropping out of the school system without qualifications, but as a useful measure for supporting the integration of young people on the labour market.

The regulations on the subject of training placements and guidance had been awaited for some time, as they could pave the way for regulating the experiments in alternance training that have now become widespread within both schools and vocational training.

The broadest commitment to the reform of the whole system of vocational training is set out in Article 17, which lays down the principles and general criteria for reorganisation, referring back to the government for detailed decisions on the rules and regulations.

The points referred back to the government for regulation (the implementing regulations are now being drawn up) are those which were the focus of debate on the modernisation of the training system throughout the 1990s, i.e.:

- simplification of procedures for the working of the system, in particular as regards the allocation of joint financing to administrations responsible for training, the system of reporting on activities and the abolition of the guarantee required of training bodies in order to obtain advances;
- the definition of pre-determined requirements to be used in identifying the training bodies to which responsibility for managing those activities would subsequently be entrusted, a problem that comes under the heading of 'accreditation';
- the construction of a national system of continuing vocational training, partly by the gradual allocation to that training channel of all the resources derived from the 0.30 % levy on employers;
- the definition of criteria for the certification of competences and the creation of a system of credit recognition.

As is obvious from these subjects, this is a reform that will have a profound effect on the system. It is in line with the indications set out by the European Community in its White Paper on training and it touches on issues that are currently the focus of debate in other European countries.

Subsequently, Legislative Decree 112/98 completed the transfer to the regions of responsibilities for vocational training. In particular the regions were entrusted with 'all the functions and administrative tasks in this field', leaving the State in charge of international relations, guidelines and coordination and identification of the standard of vocational qualifications and the minimum requirements for the accreditation of training bodies.

Side by side with the process of reform triggered by Article 7 of Law 196/97, other training streams are currently being updated. This is the case of 'new apprenticeship', for which a definition of the training content of activities outside the workplace has been initiated. It is also one of the government priorities to regulate the harmonisation of two contractual arrangements (apprenticeship and training/work contracts).

Nevertheless, the reform process now under way also extends to the education system, with the aim of integrating the two aspects of training: general education, and the side directed to the working world. Following intensive planning and consultation between the institutes and social partners, this attempt at integration has led to the launching of a new provision of higher level technical and vocational training, the regulations for which were laid down in Article 69 of Law 144 in May 1999.

In addition, in Law 9 of January 1999, approval was given to extending the period of compulsory school education to nine years — from the ages of 6 to 15. This step is in fact part of a broader process, which led in May 1999 to the extension of the period of education and training to the age of 18, to be conducted within the school system, in regional vocational training or through apprenticeship, so that every young person can acquire an upper secondary education diploma or a vocational qualification (Law 144/99). These measures are also necessary to bring the compulsory period of education in Italy into line with standards in other European countries.

The Education Minister has also presented a draft law that would reform the whole framework of Italian schools so that it is more closely integrated with the working world (referred to as the 'reform of cycles').

The spirit of reform also extends to the university world. The need to harmonise academic titles at European level points to the need for a system structured as three-year courses of study, at the end of which a first university diploma is awarded, with the option to continue with a supplementary two-year course leading to a higher qualification.

6.3. Innovative aspects

6.3.1. Towards integration of the systems

One of the priorities in the wide-ranging reform described in the previous pages is the integration between the school and training systems and the working world.

As has been made clear in the previous chapters, the institutional architecture, attitudes and organisational procedures within the Italian education and training system are very varied. This is still an obstacle to the realisation of integrated measures. The multiplicity of cultural identities should not be a constraint; on the contrary, it should be a resource and a support for the dynamic and flexible nature of the system itself.

In the light of these preliminary considerations, we should think about an integrated education and training system that moves along an axis consisting of strong, non-random links between school, training and work. One of the strong points of the new outline system — as it emerges from Community guidelines and the political and theoretical debate — is the constant stressing of one guiding principle: measures to promote employment cannot be isolated from measures to promote training and education. There should be a coordinating policy that moves along systematic and logical lines.

As has been affirmed by the recent OECD report on the review of national education policies: 'The keyword is "integration". This reform reflects the need for an overall vision of the role of education and training in society. It aspires to construct a coherent, decentralised and effective system'.

The recent legislation concerned with the overall reform of the training and education system sets itself the objective of linking the training bodies and the pathways, so as to create an actual partnership among the various parties (school, vocational training and employers).

In particular the following should be borne in mind:

- the process of decentralisation of powers for the provision of education and training, as laid down by Law 59/97. This decentralisation, combined with the independence granted to schools under the same law, will have a positive effect on the construction of an integrated training system, making it possible to draw up operational plans at local level, with close attention to the flexibility of provision and its correlation with the local economy and employment;
- Legislative Decree 112/98 implementing Law 59/97, which highlights the strategic role of the regions. They are the lynchpin of planning for the provision of both schooling and vocational training, partly as a result of the reorganisation of the responsibilities and internal structure of the Ministry of Education ;
- the regulation implementing Article 17, which states that national policies on vocational training should be regulated in an integrated manner by the various bodies (ministries and social partners) concerned with its development.

In addition to national legislation, institutional links exist between the Ministry of Education and individual regions, in the form of protocols of understanding that establish operating procedures for the integration of the various systems within the regions.

Lastly, there are many schemes for integration between the school system and vocational training, at both national and local level.

In the first group come the plans for collaboration between the Directorate of Vocational Training of the Ministry of Education and the regions regarding the introduction of post-qualification courses organised by the regions in vocational institutes. Very recently, a scheme was also launched for the introduction of higher vocational and technical education, as described in the following section.

6.3.2. Higher technical vocational training

For some time now there has been a manifest need to expand and diversify the existing provision of post-secondary training by setting up upper technical training pathways that are more substantive than the existing post-diploma courses and the level 2 regional courses, both in content and in their methodological and teaching approach, to be conducted in a non-university environment.

The reasons underlying this training policy approach — indicated as one of the priorities of the labour agreement and the OECD report — can be summarised as follows:

- Italy is one of the few European countries not to have established a non-academic higher level training sector, lasting at least one year, and it therefore finds it hard to comply with the provisions of Community Directive 92/58 on the reciprocal recognition of qualifications within the European Union;
- higher secondary routes, for reasons associated with the relatively static status of plans of study compared with developments in working processes, call for additional training itineraries for more detailed subject study and for greater technical specialisation;
- the introduction of university diplomas, although they should be regarded as an appropriate choice for the enrichment of options in tertiary education, is not a comprehensive response to young people's need for options of short vocational diploma courses;
- the creation of a higher vocational training stream is an opportunity to develop links locally between the supply of labour and the needs expressed by employers as regards people with middle to high level qualifications who could be incorporated into the production context immediately.

It is evident that a good deal of importance has been attached to this issue in the technical and political debate on the structure of the new itineraries and their impact on the post-secondary provision of training, already in itself somewhat uneven and varied.

A document, approved by the Conference of State and Regions, tackles the subject of higher training, outlining the development of post-secondary provision of training as things now stand. A framework is planned for this provision, named 'integrated higher training' *(formazione integrata superiore — FIS)*. This consists of various existing options plus a new training channel which 'synergises all the provision of training, both State and regional'.

Higher integrated training, the document stresses, will be brought about substantially via three routes:

- level 2 vocational training courses;
- higher technical vocational education and training schemes *(istruzione e formazione tecnica professionale superiore — IFTS);*
- university diploma courses.

The most innovative element is the introduction of a type of training known as 'higher technical training and education' (IFTS), meeting the need for a higher level of vocational training. The two to four semester course would aim to provide 'technical and vocational training, both in-depth and targeted, with particular reference to research, development and the implementation of applied technologies to products and processes', comparable to the provision proposed in this context in other European countries. A feature of this higher technical education and training is that it would be modular and incorporate innovative methods. It would lead to certification at national and regional level, which would also be recognised in the rest of Europe.

With the aim of launching the experiment, a planning committee has been set up, consisting of representatives of the various institutions: the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Universities and Ministry of Labour, the regions and provinces and the social partners.

Some 200 schemes presented by the regions have been funded. These schemes are for setting up higher technical training and education courses by means of collaboration between various institutions: schools, universities, regional vocational training and employers.

The experimental courses were launched in the spring of 1999 when, crucially, on 17 May, Law 144 was adopted. Article 69 places the establishment of the higher technical vocational education and training system on an official basis and also lays down the criteria for access and the national validity of the certificates awarded in the system.

6.3.3. Apprenticeship

More recently, the practice of alternance between school and workplace has been greatly boosted by the innovations introduced by Law 196/97, which outlines a 'new model' for Italian apprenticeship. Article 16 of that law in particular is a radical reform of apprenticeship, with the emphasis on its training component.

Among the main new points introduced are the following:

- the age group concerned is extended from 16 to 24, with nobody being barred on the grounds of his or her certificate of education;
- limits are placed on the length of contracts, from 18 months to four years;
- the introduction of a minimum of 120 hours of training a year outside the workplace.

The law was followed by a decree of the Labour Minister laying down general principles for training outside the workplace:

- training activities for apprentices should be modular in structure;
- the content of training should be directed towards imparting an understanding of the working process and be structured to provide across-the-board skills (covering remedial education in language and mathematics, human relations and attitudes,

knowledge of organisation, management and economics) and vocational subjects of a technical, scientific and operational type, which would differ for individual practitioners. The number of hours devoted to the core skills should be not less than 35 % of the total number of hours devoted to outside training.

It should be pointed out that the approach emerging from the statutory innovations that are shaping the 'new model of apprenticeship' is one of further enhancing this arrangement, which is likely to become the main route taken by young people up to the age of 25 to enter the working world.

For the purpose of launching the implementation of the law, the Minister for Labour has promoted experimental, nationwide schemes based on 'collective agreements concluded by unions and employers'. These schemes offer an opportunity to experiment in organisational procedures, training itineraries, teaching methods and monitoring and assessment instruments. The intention is to plan and test out a model of training for apprentices in the near future, in order to verify whether it can be extended and to pinpoint any corrective action that should be taken. The findings should serve as guidance for the introduction of the newly created apprenticeship training system.

The first two schemes relate to the metal engineering and plant installation industry and the building industry.

The scheme on 'apprenticeship training — metal engineering and plant installation industry' was launched by the agreement of March 1997 on regulating apprenticeship in this sector. It is directed at 5 000 apprentices and provides for 200 hours per year of supplementary training, of which 160 hours would be theoretical and practical training and 40 hours practical instruction. The architecture of the training routes is modular. There are three modules: a basic module, a transversal module and a technical vocational module.

The scheme for the building industry aims to involve some 2 000 apprentices in the sector, partly blue-collar and partly white-collar workers. The training course consists of 24-hour modules, corresponding to three working days. The course is made up of six modules, equivalent to 144 hours of training per year. Each module has a rigid teaching structure: nine hours for general subjects and 15 hours for those of a technical-vocational nature.

Other schemes have also been launched in the craft trades sectors and in tourism and the textile industry, as well as schemes for small and medium-sized enterprises, covering a total of some 25 000 apprentices.

Apart from the Ministry of Labour schemes, a growing number of regions have embarked on discussions with the social partners to define experimental apprenticeship schemes. In other words, a complex mechanism has been started up, with the various institutionally competent bodies working on relaunching a strategic component of the training system, which over the past few years had been left on the sidelines.

6.3.4. Training and guidance placements

Statutory intervention in the field of training and guidance placements had been awaited for some time, in order to develop links between schools, training and work. It should bridge the gap due historically to the difficulties of interaction between the world of education and its attitudes, and the world of work.

The changes made by Article 18 of Law 196/97, implemented by Ministry of Labour Decree 142/98, related to a fairly wide range of contexts.

In the first place the decree distinguishes between two types of placements *(tirocini)*:

- training placements promoted by training establishments with a view to creating a measure of alternance between study and work (in every type of establishment of higher education, including universities);
- guidance placements, promoted by parties and establishments acting in the field of labour policies to facilitate career choices through more direct familiarity with the working world.

Furthermore, the range of parties that may be involved in work experience experiments, as promoters, as host companies or as users, is being extended:

- the **traditional promoters** — all the public and private sector bodies operating in the field of training and integration into the working world: the public universities and schools, training and/or guidance centres, provincial school offices, employment agencies, labour offices — extended to include bilateral bodies and union associations, non-State universities and schools issuing legally recognised certificates of study, private training institutions that have obtained a specific regional authorisation, therapeutic communities, social cooperatives and auxiliary bodies entered in regional registers, and services for the integration of the disabled into work administered by public bodies on behalf of the region;
- the public sector may be included among **host companies**;
- the **potential users** may now also include European Community citizens gaining work experience in Italy, including those entering under specific programmes. In the future this opportunity may also be offered to citizens from outside the Community, the procedures for which will need to be defined.

The training value of placements is demonstrated through the drawing up of a proposal for a work placement period that clarifies the objectives and the arrangements, 'ensuring for students a link with the training they have received in the bodies from which they originate'. The activities performed during the training and guidance placement may be counted as training credits.

The implementing decree also establishes the maximum duration of work placement experiments, which may vary depending on the type of user:

- no longer than four months for guidance placements for students in upper secondary education;
- no longer than 12 months for university students and for those enrolled on higher training courses;
- up to 24 months for participants from disadvantaged groups.

As regards the insurance cover for trainees on job placements, the cost is borne by the promoters. A subsequent decree by the Ministry of Labour is to lay down the procedures for reimbursing host companies in central and northern Italy for the cost of the insurance, board and lodging of people from southern Italy on job placements.

An analysis of the placement experiments conducted in 1997 shows first of all how intensely the agencies for employment are working as promoters. An as yet less significant finding is the number of placements promoted by the labour offices. Most of the placements are for young people in particular, as this is an opportunity offered to diploma holders and graduates.

The universities are also stepping up their efforts to promote placements by establishing special placement offices whose job it is to activate placements for students, both graduates and undergraduates. Of particular interest is the case of the L. Bocconi University of Milan where placements for fourth-year students within, and first- and second-year students outside, the normal course are counted as training credits and may replace an examination in the plan of studies.

Experiments in placements are also becoming more common in institutes of higher education, especially for students in the final year of technical and vocational institutes. Experiments have also been conducted for pupils in teacher training institutes and academic upper secondary schools. For higher institutes as well, certain experiments are being conducted that offer a training credit for placements at the time of the final examination.

Lastly, it should be pointed out that the regulation for the reorganisation of State vocational institutes (IPS) (see Section 3.2.1), issued in 1994, has made it compulsory to have a 300-hour placement in the two-year post-qualification period.

6.3.5. The development of the certification system

The introduction of a national certification system is one of the strategic objectives of innovation in the Italian training system.

On this subject a marked innovation was introduced by the regulation implementing Article 17 of Law 196/97 (currently being approved). This regulation promotes the constitution of a national system of certification of vocational competences.

The aim is to ensure that certification throughout Italy is comparable and that it is recognised within the European Union. According to the regulation, the Ministry of Labour must formulate proposals on the criteria and procedures for certifying competences acquired within the vocational training system. By 'certifiable vocational competences' are meant all those abilities that constitute the individual's body of knowledge and working skills, the whole set of which constitutes a qualification or a vocational profile. These competences are certified by the regions.

To document the training curriculum and competences acquired, a citizen's 'training record' *(libretto formativo)* has been established. This booklet will also be used to enter training credits. Based on specific agreements between the ministries concerned and the regions, the vocational competences certified may also be recognised for the purpose of obtaining a certificate of studies or admission to an educational programme.

Over the past few years, within the Institute for the Development of Workers' Vocational Training (*Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori* — ISFOL), a substantial effort has been made to formulate new models and experiments both with the regions and with the Ministry of Education.

The objective is to develop flexible certification mechanisms that will permit a switch between the various systems, adopting the model of capitalisable units.

The basic idea is to define a 'repertory of competences' that covers all the activities on which occupations are based, distinguishing between basic competences, technical and vocational competences and core skills. The scientific and institutional debate on this theme, both national and international, in particular the analytical and planning approach to competences, is particularly expansive.

It should also be pointed out that this structure of skills has already been recognised by a Decree of the Minister of Labour of June 1996 on the application of the criteria of transparency of certifications. Today this is being tried out by almost every region.

Based on this hypothesis and on the structure of competences, a proposal has been made to adopt capitalisable training units, representing a new approach towards the planning of training and certification of competences.

The competence-centred approach and the structuring of competences as capitalisable training units radically alter the relationships between training and the individual. The same set of competences can be achieved by a range of pathways (work experience, various training curricula, etc.).

It thus becomes possible to acknowledge the individual's possession of expertise, knowledge and skills regardless of how they have been acquired and the person's own vocational qualification, giving purpose and value to experience that has been only partially acquired (for example, courses given up after a period of attendance).

Having minimum standards of competence common to all parties in the educational, training and employment system means that each individual's possession of training credits can be recognised and certified. The result is twofold:

- greater flexibility of the training itinerary, as it can be structured as a sequence of capitalisable units that is not rigid in terms of time. Each of these units can be acquired and 'stored' through a variety of training agencies that are independent but are linked with each other by their common acceptance of minimum standards;
- the adoption of a highly learner-centred teaching method (rather than centering on the teacher as the prime 'conveyor of knowledge'), starting with a recognition of the knowledge the individual already possesses and by a negotiated definition of learning objectives (in the form of which units and which itinerary are necessary for attaining the individual's training objectives).

Competence-centred certification is also the 'historic step' needed to make the quantum leap in quality and move from the certification of attendance at courses to the certification of competences 'actually acquired'.

This draws our attention to another important objective: the construction of a system of certification whose aims, clearly defined by the labour agreement, are to guarantee the transparency and integration of the systems and the maximum capitalisation of individual and work experience, however that may have been acquired. This process has already started in other countries in the European Union.

It is therefore accepted that there must be a national body to construct a repertoire of training standards and capitalisable units, as a reference to be used for clarifying, in a logical, coherent and uniform manner, the various segments of training and educational experience. This uniform reference will be the basis on which to found the recognition of credits and ensure that the systems are in fact transparent.

In constructing training standards, it will be essential to harmonise this planning as far as possible with the experience built up over the past few years in the various regions as regards the definition of pilot projects, regulations on teaching methods and other factors, and in schools and universities, in terms of curricula and programmes for specific itineraries or diplomas or degree courses.

It has also been established that the certification system must necessarily be national and uniform and that, once the certification of either competences and/or the training itinerary has taken place, the system will enable individuals to become the holders of a potential 'credit' and to apply for those competences to be 'credited' to them:

- within the same training system (so that they can shorten a training route which would otherwise have been longer);
- within another training system without having to start from scratch every time they move from one to another, but placing proper value on the competences and training already acquired and certified;
- within the relationship between the training system and employment (for example enabling them to obtain recognition of even the partial competences acquired elsewhere, perhaps in training/work contracts or apprenticeship), but also enabling them to see their own training itinerary in a fresh light and therefore to rationalise and optimise it.

The instrument of the individual training record — also mentioned in the proposed reform of school education cycles issued by the Ministry of Education — should in the future become a genuine 'identity card' for each individual. There are various regional experiments that refer to this instrument, and in certain regions it is already confirmed in the regulations covering vocational training. Examples are: the 'training passport' (*passaporto formativo*) issued in the province of Bolzano; the 'personal training booklet' (*libretto formativo personale*) in the region of Lazio; the personal vocational certification booklet (*libretto personale di certificazione professionale*) in the regions of Liguria and Molise; the 'individual training booklet' (*libretto formativo individuale*) in the region of Piedmont; the 'vocational booklet' (*libretto professionale*) in Veneto; the 'individual booklet' (*libretto individuale*) being tried out in the province of Trento; and other experiments already launched in other regions and in many training centres.

The pages that follow contain a summary table of the innovatory certification procedures adopted at local level.

Other experiments are currently being conducted within the Ministry of Education, with particular reference to technical and vocational institutes. These experiments have the technical support of ISFOL, which has developed a significant line of research in this sector and which is monitoring many regional and national experiments.

Table 55 **Innovative certification procedures at regional level**

Region/ Autonomous province	Name	Content	Stage of implementation	Sphere of application	Legislative, statutory and/or planning references
Abruzzi	Training booklet *(libretto formativo)*	The individual's training itinerary	Experimental use	Retraining courses for vocational training practitioners	No specific statutory references have been indicated
Basilicata	Training booklet *(libretto formativo)*	Assessments of the results achieved by the person in various sections of the training route	Experimental use	400 hours of alternance training for young unemployed people	No specific statutory references have been indicated
Bolzano	Training passport *(passaporto formativo)*	Training and vocational curriculum of the trainee	Planning	All training activities	Three-year plan for vocational training in Alto Adige 1996/98, Project for the 'Realisation of a systematic link between basic and continuing vocational training'
	Portfolio (instrument used but not yet covered by regulations)	Indication of the occupational spheres in which the person has already worked and description of course subjects and disciplines	De facto use without formal recognition	Courses for apprentices in the hotel sector (German language)	This is a *de facto* instrument and therefore it does not have any specific statutory references

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(continued)

Region/ Autonomous province	**Name**	**Content**	**Stage of implementation**	**Sphere of application**	**Legislative, statutory and/or planning references**
Emilia-Romagna	Certificate of competence (*certificato di competenza)* and certificate of advanced competence	• Type of course • Access requirements • Contents • Competences acquired	Instrument adopted under the 1997–99 directives	Being tried out in certain post-graduate courses	Regional Board 1997 decision
	Certificate of compliance (*attestato di conformità*) with regional training standards	Declaration of conformity of the course attended with the regional training standards as a condition for subsequent access to the accreditation examination (and certification of individual attendance)	Instrument currently being applied	Training activities for managers and the workforce laid down under the *Amianto* Plan (Law 257)	Regional Board and Council decision
Lazio	Trainee's training booklet (*libretto formativo dell'allievo)*	• Description of any work experience • Information on further training courses (title, duration, year, organising body) • Course objectives • Areas covered • Trainers • Assessments of each area covered (with a breakdown by theoretical, practical and placement work) • Number of hours in the course • Number of hours absent • Overall assessment in relation to: pace of learning, speed and precision of implementation, ability to work in a group, willingness to accept suggestions and proposals, ability to organise own work	Adopted since 1992	Extended to all training courses	Decision by the Regional Board, No 3904 of 14 May 1996

(continued)

Region/ Autonomous province	Name	Content	Stage of implementation	Sphere of application	Legislative, statutory and/or planning references
Liguria	Personal booklet of vocational certification *(libretto personale di certificazione professionale)*	• Previous school career and the qualifications acquired • Nature of course, duration and subjects taught • Nature and duration of work placements • Intermediate and final examination results • Information on further training courses	Planning (the specific model for the booklet is to be adopted by a decision of the Regional Board)	Extended to all pupils in vocational training courses	Regional Law 52/1993
Molise	Certification booklet *(libretto di certificazione)*	• Nature of the course and its duration • Competences acquired • Information on any other training courses	Planning	Extended to all vocational training course trainees	Regional Law 10/1995
Piedmont	Individual training booklet *(libretto formativo individuale)*	Individual's training curriculum, with sole reference to the vocational training system	Instrument already adopted; used on a small scale for the certification of credits	Mainly used in post-qualification courses	Regional Law 63/95
	Certification of credits *(certificazione dei crediti)*	Recognition of credits acquired by the individual (rather than of training schemes attended) on the basis of previous training and work experience. Internal structuring: • school qualifications • experience of placement or work (with assessment examination)	Instrument already adopted, is gradually taking over from the training booklet in practice	Also used in level 1 courses	Regional Law 63/95 (and the subsequent implementing resolution on training standards)

(continued)

Region/ Autonomous province	Name	Content	Stage of implementation	Sphere of application	Legislative, statutory and/or planning references
Tuscany	Certification of credits *(certificazione dei crediti)*		Being tried out (province of Prato)	Integrated training/ school education two-year period (four evening courses)	1997/99 three-year regional plan for vocational training — guidelines for the development of a system of certification of vocational training credits.
Trento	Training booklet *(libretto formativo)*	• The individual's training itinerary, specifying the skills acquired and, if requested by the individual, copies of assessments • Type of course • Name of training scheme • Duration (in hours) • Skills acquired (brief description) • Subjects covered • Type and methods of assessment • Type of certification issued • Indication of final assessment	The specific 'format' is currently being produced	All courses from June 1997	Provincial Board decision of 21 March 1997
	Personal evaluation card *(scheda personale di valutazione)* (instrument for training purposes)	Assessment (adequate, inadequate, fair, good, excellent) in relation to: • vocational skills and abilities; • vocationally-oriented knowledge; • independence and ability to integrate in work situations; • motivation and interest in work; • placement experience	Instrument already adopted (for training purposes)	Third year of the new experimental course of basic training	Provincial Board decision, January 1997

(continued)

Region/ Autonomous province	Name	Content	Stage of implementation	Sphere of application	Legislative, statutory and/or planning references
Veneto	Occupational booklet *(libretto professionale)*	• Initial and continuing vocational training • Gradually acquired knowledge and skills • Levels of occupational competences subsequently acquired	Planning	All training activities	Regional Law 10/1990 Regional Law 10/1991

6.3.6. The accreditation of training bodies

Law 845/78 has already identified certain requirements for establishments providing vocational training. They must be non-profit-making, have suitable structures and equipment, ensure that activities are monitored, apply the national collective agreement for the category of personnel concerned, and publish their annual accounts. These requirements were at the time seen as adequate guarantees of the reliability of the training organisation and the quality of training provided, which was almost exclusively directed at a group of very young people, and therefore had considerable educational as well as occupation-oriented objectives.

During the 1980s the expansion in the reference user groups led to a rethinking of some of those requirements. In particular a new concern for level 2 training and then for continuing vocational training meant that there was no longer a need for the bodies applying to administer training activities to be non-profit-making, but they should aim exclusively at developing 'occupation-related' abilities.

Over the last few years the general adoption of public tendering procedures in evaluating the potential to conduct training, as required when using European resources, has shifted the focus of attention from the applicant body to the scheme proposed. One of the resulting findings was that certain bodies were incapable of implementing the activities in the manner set out in the scheme. This pointed up the need for prior checks on the reliability of those bodies.

In the wake of what was happening within companies, during the 1990s there was also widespread application of the certification models set out in ISO 9000 to training activities.

Article 17 of Law 196/97 also recognised the need to monitor the reliability of training bodies and suggested the accreditation method, in other words the drawing up of a sort of short list of training bodies to which activities could be entrusted. The implementing decree associated with this article outlines a model of accreditation hinging on five factors:

- logistic and structural abilities;
- financial status;
- availability of professional skills in management, administration, teaching, coordination, analysis, planning and evaluation of needs, and guidance;
- levels of effectiveness and efficiency achieved in previous activities;
- interrelations developed with the social and production system in the local area.

Within six months of the regulation coming into force, the Labour Minister, by agreement with the Conference of State and Regions, was to define 'the requisite minimum standards and evaluation criteria for operating structures for the purpose of accreditation'. Subsequently regions were to launch procedures to select training bodies.

All public and private establishments, whatever their legal status, may apply for accreditation to conduct vocational training and guidance. This obligation of accreditation does not apply to employers intending to engage in the training of their own employees.

The regulation associated with Article 17 of Law 196/97 also provides for a simplified procedure for the award of accreditation to bodies that are already ISO 9001 certified. These must merely demonstrate that they meet the requirements regarding levels of effectiveness and efficiency achieved in previous activities and their interrelation with the local economy.

For newly constituted training structures, the regions must merely ascertain whether the structural requirements are satisfied and whether they possess the human and financial resources.

The model of accreditation outlined is very close to what has already been adopted by the region of Emilia-Romagna, which expected to be able to publish its first list of accredited bodies by September 1999.

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Annexes

Annex 1

Acronyms and abbreviations

ACI	*Automobil club italiano* Italian automobile club
AIMA	*Azienda di Stato per gli interventi nel mercato agricolo* State agency for intervention on the agricultural market
ANAS	*Ente nazionale per le strade* National roads body
CASA	*Confederazione autonoma sindacati artigiani* Autonomous confederation of craft trade unions
Censis	*Centro studi investimenti sociali* Social investment research centre
CFL	*Contratto di formazione e lavoro* Training/work contract
CGIL	*Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro* Italian general confederation of labour
CISL	*Confederazione italiana sindacati lavoratori* Italian trade union confederation
CNA	*Confederazione nazionale dell'artigianato e delle piccole imprese* National confederation of craft trades and small firms
CNEL	*Consiglio nazionale dell'economia e del lavoro* Nation council for the economy and labour
CNR	*Consiglio nazionale delle ricerche* National research council
Coldiretti	*Confederazione nazionale coltivatori diretti* National confederation of small farmers
Confagricoltura	*Confederazione generale dell'agricoltura italiana* Italian general agricultural confederation
Confapi	*Confederazione italiana piccola e media impresa* Italian confederation of small and medium-sized enterprises
Confartigianato	*Confederazione generale italiana dell'artigianato* Italian general confederation of craft trades
Confcommercio	*Confederazione generale italiana del commercio, del turismo e dei servizi* Italian general confederation of commerce, tourism and services
Confesercenti	*Confederazione italiana esercenti — attività commerciali turistiche e dei servizi* Italian confederation of retail, tourism and services traders
Confindustria	*Confederazione generale dell'industria italiana* Italian general confederation of industry
CONI	*Comitato olimpico nazionale italiano* Italian national Olympics committee
ENALC	*Ente nazionale addestramento dei lavoratori del commercio* National agency for the training of retail workers

ENEA	*Ente per le nuove tecnologie, l'energia e l'ambiente* Agency for new technology, energy and the environment
FIS	*Formazione integrata superiore* Integrated higher training
FSE — ESF	*Fondo sociale europeo* European Social Fund
IFTS	*Istruzione e formazione tecnica professionale superiore* Higher technical vocational education and training
IGFOR	*Ispettorato generale per l'amministrazione del fondo di rotazione per l'attuazione delle politiche comunitarie* Inspectorate general for the administration of the revolving fund for the implementation of Community polices
Inacli	*Istituto nazionale dei lavoratori dell'industria* National institute of industrial workers
INAIL	*Istituto nazionale per l'assicurazione contro gli infortuni sul lavoro* National institute for industrial accident insurance
Inecoop	*Istituto nazionale per l'educazione cooperativa* National institute for cooperative education
Inforcoop	*Istituto nazionale di formazione cooperativa* National institute for cooperative training
INPDAI	*Istituto nazionale di previdenza per i dirigenti di aziende industriali* National welfare institute for the managers of industrial concerns
Inpdap	*Istituto nazionale di previdenza per i dipendenti dell'amministrazione pubblica* National welfare institute for public administration employees
INPS	*Istituto nazionale previdenza sociale* National social welfare institute
IPS	*Istituti professionali di Stato* State vocational institutes
Ipsema	*Istituto di previdenza per il settore marittimo* Welfare institute for the maritime sector
ISCO	*Istituto nazionale per lo studio della congiuntura* National institute for research on economic trends
ISFOL	*Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori* Institute for the development of workers' vocational training
Ispesl	*Istituto superiore per la prevenzione e la sicurezza del lavoro* Higher institute for the prevention of accidents and for safety at work
ISTAT	*Istituto centrale di statistica* Central statistical institute
MPI	*Ministero della Pubblica istruzione* Ministry of Education

MURST	*Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca scientifica e tecnologica* Ministry of Universities and Scientific and Technological Research
OBN	*Organismo bilaterale nazionale* National bilateral body
OCSE — OECD	*Organizzazione per la cooperazione e lo sviluppo economico* Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PO — OP	*Programma operativo* Operational programme
POM — MOP	*Programma operativo multi-regionale* Multi-regional operating programme
SIRGS	*Sistema informativo della ragioneria generale dello Stato* State general accountancy information system
UIL	*Unione italiana del lavoro* Italian labour union

Annex 2

Important organisations

ANAPIA
Associazione nazionale addestramento professionale industria e agricoltura
Via In Lucina, 10
00186 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 68 80 93 47

ANAP Leone XIII
Associazione nazionale addestramento professionale
Via Angelo Bargoni, 78, modulo P
00153 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 581 6505

Ass. FOR GEO Scrl
Via Merulana, 19
00185 Rome

Casa di carità arti e mestieri
Corso Benedetto Brin, 26
10149 Turin
Tel. (39) 011 382 5206

Censis
Fondazione centro studi investimenti sociali
Piazza di Novella, 2
00199 — Rome
Tel. (39) 06 86 09 11
http://www.censis.it/

Centro studi — Opera Don Calabria
Via San Zeno in Monte, 23
37129 Verona
Tel. (39) 045 59 50 99

Cescot
Centro sviluppo commercio e turismo
Via Messina 19
00198 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 44 23 83 96
Fax (39) 06 44 25 03 04

CGIL
Confederazione generale italiana del lavoro
Corso d'Italia 25
00198 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 84 761
Fax (39) 06 884 5683
http://www.cgil.it

CIF
Centro italiano femminile
Via Carlo Zucchi, 25
00165 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 662 2568

CIOFS — FP
Centro italiano opere femminili salesiane — Formazione professionale
Via San Saba 14
00153 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 572 9911
Fax (39) 06 572 99154

CIPA-AT
Centro istruzione professionale agricola — Assistenza tecnica
Via Mariano Fortuny, 20
00196 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 361 0995
Fax (39) 06 361 3153

CISL
Confederazione italiana sindacati lavoratori
Via Po, 21
00198 Rome
Tel.(39) 06 84 731
Fax (39) 06 854 6076
http://www.cisl.it/

CLES
Via Bruno Buozzi, 105
00197 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 321 6713
CNA

Confederazione nazionale dell'artigianato e della piccola e media impresa
Via Guattani, 13
00161 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 441 881
Fax (39) 06 44 24 95 13
http://web.tin.it/can_mn/

CNEL
Consiglio nazionale dell'economia e del lavoro
Vle David Lubin, 2
00196 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 369 21
Fax (39) 06 320 2867

CNIPA
Consorzio nazionale istruzione professionale artigiana
Via Palestro 7
00122 Ancona
Tel. (39) 071 20 45 31

CNOS FAP
Centro nazionale opere salesiane — Formazione e addestramento professionale
Via Appia Antica 78
00179 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 513 8236
Fax (39) 06 513 7028
http://www.cnos.org/

Coldiretti
Confederazione nazionale coltivatori diretti
Via XXIV Maggio, 43
00187 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 468 21
Fax (39) 06 487 1199
http://www.coldiretti.it

Confagricoltura
Confederazione generale dell'agricoltura italiana
Corso Vittorio Emanuele II, 101
00186 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 68 521
Fax (39) 06 686 1726
http://www.confagricoltura.it/

Confapi
Via Colonna Antonina, 52
00186 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 678 2441
Fax (39) 06 679 1488

Confartigianato
Confederazione generale italiana dell'artigianato
Via S. Giovanni in Laterano, 152
00184 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 70 37 41
Fax (39) 06 70 45 21 88
http://www.confartigianato.it/

Confcommercio
Piazza G.G. Belli
00153 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 58 661
Fax (39) 06 580 9425
http://www.confcommercio.it/

Confesercenti
Confederazione italiana esercenti
Via Farini, 5
00185 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 4725
Fax (39) 06 580 9425
http://www.confesercenti.it/

Confindustria
Confederazione generale dell'industria italiana
Area di sviluppo associativo e formazione
Viale dell'Astronomia, 30
00144 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 59 031
Fax (39) 06 591 9615
http://www.confindustria.it/

Consorzio scuole lavoro
Via XX Settembre 22
10121 Turin
Tel. (39) 011 518 4715

ECIPA
Viale Castro Pretorio, 25
00185 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 446 9586

EISS
Ente italiano di servizio sociale
Viale Ferdinando Baldelli, 41
00146 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 540 2083
Fax (39) 06 540 2762

ENAIP
Ente nazionale Acli istruzione professionale
Via Giuseppe Marcora 1820
00153 Rome
Tel. (39) 0658 401
http://www.forobit.it/enaip-lazio/

ENAO
Via Rosamini, 10
37123 Verona

ENAP
Ente nazionale addestramento professionale
Via F. Rosazza, 38
00153 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 581 9207

Endofap
Ente nazionale Don Orione — Formazione aggiornamento professionale
Via della Camilluccia, 112
00135 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 77 20 57 06
Fax (39) 06 77 07 88 83
http://www.intels.com/donorione.lazio

ENFAP
Ente nazionale formazione addestramento professionale
Largo Ascianghi, 5
00153 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 588 4325
Fax (39) 06 85 28 25 91

ENGIM
Ente nazionale Giuseppini del Murialdo
Via degli Etruschi, 7
00185 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 445 6284
http://www.racine.ra.it/engim/

Formedil
Ente nazionale per la formazione e l'addestramento professionale nell'edilizia
Viale di Villa Massimo, 39
00161 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 44 23 87 60
Fax (39) 06 44 23 86 56

Formez
Centro di formazione e studi per il Mezzogiorno
Via Salaria, 229
00199 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 85 35 46 27
Fax (39) 06 84 89 32 42
http://www.formez.it/

IAL nazionale
Istituto addestramento lavoratori
Via Trionfale, 101
00136 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 39 72 81 72
http://www.ial.lazio.it/

Inecoop
Istituto nazionale per l'educazione cooperativa
Via Antonio Gramsci, 14
00197 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 321 6124
Fax (39) 06 322 6652

Inforcoop Scrl
Istituto nazionale di formazione cooperativa
Via di Santa Costanza, 46
00198 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 85 35 58 97

INIPA
Istituto nazionale istruzione professionale agricola
Via XXIV Maggio, 43
00187 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 46821
Fax (39) 06 468 2359

ISFOL
Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori
Via G.B. Morgagni, 33
00161- Rome
Tel. (39) 06 44 59 01
Fax (39) 06 44 25 16 09
http://www.isfol.it/

Ministero del Lavoro e della Previdenza sociale
Ufficio centrale per l'orientamento e la formazione professionale dei lavoratori
Vicolo d'Aste, 12
00159 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 43 53 10 76
http://www.minlavoro.it/

Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione
Direzione generale dell'istruzione classica, scientifica e magistrale
Viale Trastevere, 76
00153 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 58491
http://www.istruzione.it/

Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca scientifica e tecnologica
Pl. Kennedy, 20
00144 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 59911
http://www.murst.it/

OBN
Organismo bilaterale nazionale per la formazione
Viale Pasteur, 6
00144 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 591 3181

SFO Sdpa
Viale Pasteur, 6
00144 Rome

SMILE
Sistemi e metodologie innovative per il lavoro e l'educazione
Via Buonarroti, 12
00185 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 47 82 49 01
Fax (39) 06 47 82 49 65

UIL
Unione italiano del lavoro,
Via Lucullo, 6
00187 Rome
Tel. (39) 06 47531
Fax (39) 06 475 3208
http://www.uil.it/

Annex 3

Basic glossary

Apprenticeship (*Apprendistato*)

A special working relationship that combines work and, for an average of at least 120 hours a year, theoretical training outside the workplace. The age group which may be taken on as apprentices is 16 to 24 (up to 26 in areas covered by ESF Objectives 1 and 2).

Continuing vocational training (*Formazione continua*)

Training designed for workers in employment and at risk of unemployment.

Community Support Framework — CSF (*Quadro comunitario di sostegno — QCS*)

This establishes the priorities and contains an analysis of the socioeconomic situation in the area in which intervention is to take place, the strategy and development priorities, the funding plans and the arrangements for the implementation of the support planning itself. It is the outcome of negotiation between a Member State and the European Commission.

European Social Fund — ESF (*Fondo sociale europeo — FSE*)

Has the objective of promoting, within the European Union, opportunities for employment and the geographical mobility of workers, as well as facilitating their adaptation to industrial conversion and changes in production systems, in particular through training and job retraining. The priorities identified by the 1988 reform of the Structural Funds relate to the promotion of development in less developed regions (Objective 1), regions affected by industrial decline (Objective 2), the prevalently rural regions (Objective 3) and those employed there (Objective 4), as well as accelerating the adaptation of agricultural structures (Objective 5a).

Job title (*Qualifica lavorativa*)

The tasks to which a worker is assigned under his contract (lathe operator or maintenance engineer, for example) or the reference contractual category (skilled worker).

Labour force (*Forza lavoro*)

People on the labour market who, at a given point, either have a job or are actively seeking employment.

Multi-regional operational programme — MOP (*Programma operativo multiregionale — POM*)

An operational programme may, geographically, be regional if it concerns a specific region, or multi-regional (MOP) when it is directed towards all the areas regarded as admissible by each objective.

Operational programme — OP (*Programma operativo — PO*)

This is the planning document setting out the proposed interventions and the procedures for implementation as indicated in the CSF (Community support framework) and the single planning document. It is defined as an organic set of multiannual actions and it represents the main form of interventions under ESF planning.

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Single planning document — SPD (*Documento unico di programmazione — DOCUP*)

Sets out the priorities for development and the contribution requests defined by the Member State for Objectives 2, 4 and 5b. Summarises in a single document both the details of the Community support framework and of the operational programme.

Structural Funds (*Fondi strutturali*)

European Community financial instruments whose purpose is to narrow gaps between regions and reduce the extent to which less advantaged regions lag behind.

Training/work contract (*Contratto di formazione lavoro*)

Special working relationship for a period of one or two years under which an employer takes on a named young person (aged 15 to 26, on occasions extended to the age of 32), combining attendance at ad hoc training cycles and work in the workplace.

Vocational training (*Formazione professionale*)

Set of measures to promote initial entry into the working world, refresher training, retraining and vocational guidance, continuing, permanent and lifelong training, and training as a result of the redevelopment of production activities.

Vocational training qualification (*Qualifica di formazione professionale*)

Recognition, regulated by law, of systematically imparted vocational training, directed towards the acquisition of the job skills required and specified for access to a given occupation.

Workers on job mobility lists (*Lavoratori in cassa mobilità*)

These are workers who are no longer working for a company and are in the process of being dismissed. They are therefore looking for a new employer. They receive an indemnity and have precedence on the labour market.

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ISFOL
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ISFOL
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Main statutory instruments 1997–98

Law 15 May 127/97 ('Urgent measures for the streamlining of administration and decision-making and monitoring procedures'). Teaching autonomy: guidance note.

The provisions regarding universities in Law 127/97 (Art. 17, paragraph 95 et seq.) are intended to confer autonomy on the universities, especially in their teaching.

The 'guidance note' sets out the subjects of the reform, the implementing measures through 'area decrees' for the incorporation of courses of study in certain macro-areas and the innovations that may be introduced immediately.

Such innovations include: the activation of teaching credits, the students' adoption of individual study plans *'guided'* by the teaching bodies, approval of the university teaching regulations, greater flexibility in the use of teachers within the teaching schedule, proposals for changes to teaching systems and therefore the setting up of newly established courses.

Law 196, 24 June 1997, 'Regulations on the promotion of employment'
This introduces radical and incisive changes in the legal ordering of work, in particular of vocational training, thus launching the process of reform of the sector, promoting new forms of employment contracts (temporary work) and modifying apprenticeships and placements, introducing a system of continuing vocational training, defining accreditation criteria for training practitioners, etc.

Law 425/97 ('Provisions for the reform of State examinations on completion of upper secondary education (*Maturità*)')
Law 425/97 has reformed the arrangements for State certificates at the end of upper secondary education.

Law 440/97 ('Establishment of the Fund for the enrichment and expansion of the provision of training and steps to promote equality')

Law 440/97 established a fund known as the 'Fund for the enrichment and expansion of the provision of training and steps to promote equality'. This is intended to finance a series of schemes to improve the quality of schooling.

Legislative Decree 469/97 ('Conferring on the regions and local bodies responsibilities and tasks relating to the labour market, pursuant to Article 1 of Law 59 of 15 March 1997')

This implements Article 1 of what is known as the *Bassanini* Law (Law 59 of 15 March 1997), giving the regions further functions related to the regulation of the labour market.

Legislative Decree 112/98 ('Conferring on the regions and local bodies the State's responsibilities and tasks relating to the labour market, pursuant to Chapter I of Law 59 of 15 March 1997')

This decree completes the transfer of vocational training functions to the regions, which are also made responsible for the planning of an integrated training system.

Ministerial Decree 142/98 ('Regulations setting out the norms for the implementation of the principles and criteria contained in Article 18 of the Law 196 of 24 June 1997 on training and guidance placements')

The ministerial decree implements the principles and criteria set out in Article 18 of Law 196/97 on the conduct of training and guidance placements. In particular, it specifies the bodies by which such placements are to be conducted and the procedures.

Ministerial Decree of 8 April 1998

'Provisions regarding the training content of the training of apprentices'.

The decree implements Article 16, second paragraph, of Law 196 of 24 June 1997 (the '*Treu* Package') and defines in greater detail the organisational procedures for the new form of apprenticeship.

Law 9 of 20 January 1999

'Urgent measures to raise the minimum school-leaving age'.

The Law increases the period of compulsory schooling from eight to ten years.

Provisionally, during the preliminary period of application, the period of compulsory schooling will be nine years; in other words, the minimum school-leaving age will be raised to 15.

Law 144 of 17 May 1999

'Investment measures, delegation to the government to reorganise employment incentives and the regulations for INAIL, as well as the arrangements for the reorganisation of welfare agencies'.

The law raises the period of compulsory education and training to the age of 18.

The training channels through which this obligation can be met are:
(a) the (school) education system;
(b) the regional training system;
(c) the apprenticeship system.

The law also established higher technical education and training courses.

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